CHILDREN'S STORIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

NY PUBLIC LIBRARY THE BRANCH LIBRARIES
3 3333 05967 8769

810.9 Wright
5339 Rec
Children's stories in American
literature, 1660-1860

REFERENCE

C810.9
W

THE CENTRAL CHILDREN'S ROOM
DONNELL LIBRARY CENTER
20 WEST 53 STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/childrensstories00wrig3

CHILDREN'S STORIES

IN

AMERICAN LITERATURE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

CHILDREN'S STORIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1861–1896. One vol., 12mo . . . $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1660–1860. One vol., 12mo . . . $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES OF AMERICAN PROGRESS. One vol., 12mo. Illustrated $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES IN AMERICAN HISTORY. One vol., 12mo. Illustrated $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES OF THE GREAT SCIENTISTS. One vol., 12mo. Illustrated $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE. FROM TALIESIN TO SHAKESPEARE. One vol., 12mo $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE. FROM SHAKESPEARE TO TENNYSON. One vol., 12mo $1.25

THE PRINCESS LILLIWINKINS AND OTHER STORIES. One vol., 12mo. Illustrated $1.25

CHILDREN'S STORIES

IN

AMERICAN LITERATURE

1660-1860

BY

HENRIETTA CHRISTIAN WRIGHT

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1909

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
5359
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

Copyright, 1895, by
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

C810.9
W

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I PAGE

THE EARLY LITERATURE, ... 1

CHAPTER II

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON—1780–1851, ... 14

CHAPTER III

WASHINGTON IRVING—1783–1859, ... 28

CHAPTER IV

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER—1789–1851, ... 51

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT—1794–1878, ... 69

CHAPTER VI

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT—1796–1859, ... 82

CHAPTER VII

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER—1807–1892, ... 96

CHAPTER VIII

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE—1804–1864, ... 108

CHAPTER IX PAGE

GEORGE BANCROFT—1800–1891, ... 123

CHAPTER X

EDGAR ALLAN POE—1809–1849, ... 137

CHAPTER XI

RALPH WALDO EMERSON—1803–1882, ... 149

CHAPTER XII

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW—1807–1882, . . . 156

CHAPTER XIII

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY—1814–1877, ... 174

CHAPTER XIV

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE—1811–1896, ... 188

CHAPTER XV

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL—1819–1892, ... 203

CHAPTER XVI

FRANCIS PARKMAN—1823–1893, ... 219

CHAPTER XVII

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES—1809–1894, ... 234

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY LITERATURE

One Sunday morning, about the year 1661, a group of Indians was gathered around a noble-looking man, listening to a story he was reading. It was summer and the day was beautiful, and the little Indian children who sat listening were so interested that not even the thought of their favorite haunts by brookside or meadow could tempt them from the spot. The story was about the life of Christ and his mission to the world, and the children had heard it many times, but to-day it seemed new to them because it was read in their own language, which had never been printed before. This was the Mohegan tongue, which was spoken in different dialects by the Indians generally throughout Massachusetts; and although it had been used for hundreds of years by the tribes in that part of the country its ap-

pearance on paper was as strange to them as if it had been a language of which they knew not a single word. It was just as strange to them, in fact, as if they had heard one of their war cries or love songs set to music, or had seen a picture of their dreams of the happy hunting grounds in that invisible western world where the sun went every night, and which they expected to see only after death.

The man who was reading the old story was John Eliot, an English missionary, who had devoted his life to the Indians, and whose ambition it was to leave behind him as his greatest gift the Bible translated into their own tongue. With this in view he set about making them familiar with the Christian faith, and established Sunday-schools among them, where men, women, and children alike were instructed.

From time to time they heard read stories from the New Testament which Eliot had translated, and in which he was greatly helped by one or two Indians who had gifts as translators, and could express the English thought into Indian words more fitting and beautiful than Eliot him-

self could have done. In all his earlier missionary work he also had the assistance of the great sachem Waban, because, as it happened, the first sermon Eliot ever preached to the Indians was delivered in Waban's wigwam. The text was from the old poetic words of Ezekiel—"Say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God," etc.

The Indian name for wind was Waban, the old sachem's name, and he thought the sermon was addressed to him. He became an ardent convert and helped Eliot greatly in his work of Christianizing the tribes, and in particular in his trouble to keep peace among the sachems, who objected to the freedom of thought which the new religion taught, thinking that it interfered with their own authority over their people.

In a little book in which Eliot describes these grievances of the chiefs he calls them *Pills for the Sachems*, and says they were much harder to swallow than even the nauseous doses of their medicine men.

For the better instruction of the Indian children Eliot prepared a small primer, which was printed in 1669, eight years after the New Testa-

ment was printed. It was a curious little book, having the alphabet in large and small letters on the fly-leaf, and containing the Apostles' Creed, the Catechism, and the Lord's Prayer, with other religious matter. Out of this primer the Indian youth learned to read and to spell in words of one syllable. When he was able to master the whole Bible, which was printed in 1663, his education was considered complete.

This old Indian Bible, which Eliot was ten years in translating, was printed at Cambridge and bound in dark blue morocco, it being the first Bible and one of the first books ever printed in America. Two hundred copies were made, and a second edition contained a dedication to Charles II. of England, praising him for his goodness in distributing the word of God among his colonies, which had not yielded him gold and silver as the Spanish colonies had yielded their sovereign, but which would nevertheless redound to his immortal glory as the first-fruits of Christianity among those heathen tribes. The dedication took up two pages, which was about all the English the old book contained, the rest being

in that curious, half-musical, half-guttural tongue of the Mohegans, which Cotton Mather said had been growing since the time of the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel. Certainly some of the words are of such mighty length and awful sound that we may well believe the same old preacher when he says that he knew from personal knowledge that demons could understand Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, but that they were utterly baffled by the speech of the American Indians.

Very few of these Bibles now exist, and those are of priceless value to lovers of old books.

One of the earliest books that may be claimed as belonging to American letters was a volume descriptive of the early settlements in Virginia by Captain John Smith. It has great value as a representation of Indian life before its contact with white civilization. Smith had followed the army of England through the greater part of Europe and Asia and knew the life of a soldier of fortune. He had fought with Turks, hunted Tartars, and had always been the hero of the occasion. The Indian to him was but another

kind of heathen to subdue, and the book is full of adventures, in which he describes himself as always intrepid and victorious. This is the earliest book that brings the Indians of the colonies closely before our eyes, and its style is good, and shows that strong, terse, English fibre which characterized the writings of the adventurous Englishman of that time. In another book Smith gives a charming description of inland Virginia, whose birds, flowers, wild animals, rivers, and scenery are discussed in a poetic fashion that throws a new light on the character of the adventurous soldier. There is in both volumes a richness of description in the details of Indian life that possesses a rare value to the student. The story of Smith's visit to Powhatan, the father of Pocahontas, reads like a bit of oriental fairy lore, and the great Indian chief, seated upon his couch of skins, with his savage guard around him, is brought as vividly before our eyes as the hero of a romance. And so Smith's books stand for good literature, though written only with the idea of familiarizing the people at home with the condition of the new colony, and they make

no mean showing as the beginning of American letters.

In New England literature from the first partook inevitably of the Puritan character. There were long journals of the pilgrim fathers, books on books of sermons, and volume after volume of argument on the burning religious questions that had been heard in England since the first Puritan defied the king and openly declared for freedom of conscience. Among the most celebrated of these old books is the *Bay Psalm Book* of 1640, in which the psalms of David were done into metre for the use of congregations. This book, in which the beautiful Hebrew poetry is tortured into the most abominable English, is a fair example of the religious verse-making of the day.

A curious book was the first almanac, published at Cambridge in 1689, and which contained prognostications of the weather, dates of historical events, general news of the world, and bits of poetry, having also blank spaces for the use of the owner, who could either utilize them for preserving his own verses, as Cotton Mather

did, or keep therein his accounts with his wig maker and hair-dresser, as did that worthy Puritan Thomas Prince.

Perhaps the greatest poet of those early times was Anne Bradstreet, who wrote her famous poems on the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies, and who was called the tenth muse by an admiring public. These works are long and learned, but they show less the poetic spirit of the age than do the short but pointed ballads that sprang up from time to time and which indicated the popular feeling over the events that were making the history of New England. These ballads were on every conceivable subject, from the Day of Judgment to the sale of a cow. The war between England and France for the possession of Canada gave rise to many ditties the tunes of which remained popular long afterward. The Indian wars also furnished material for many. They were printed in almanacs, or loose sheets, and sometimes not printed at all. They served as news-venders long before the first newspaper was published (in 1690) and they expressed, as nothing else

could have done, the attitude of the people toward the church, the state, the governor, and even the "tidy man" (tithing-man), whose duty it was to tickle with a hazel rod any youngster who was unlucky enough to fall asleep in church. Later, in revolutionary times, the ballad became a power second to none. Here first appears that great hero Yankee Doodle, who comes, like will-o'-the-wisp, from no one knows where, although many learned pages have been written to show his nationality. He seems to have been as great a traveller as Marco Polo or Baron Munchausen, and, like them, he must have seen many strange sights and countries. Perhaps he may have a trace of the gypsy in him and could recall, if he liked, strange wanderings through the Far East. He may have been a camp-follower through the German and Flemish wars. It is more than probable that he hobnobbed with the Italian banditti, and took an elfish delight in depriving honest travellers of their wits and purses. We know that he lived for a time in Holland, where he seems to have preferred a peaceful life and was content with

the humdrum existence of those worthy Dutch farmers who invited him to their feasts, welcomed him to their roofs, and sang his praises in their harvest-fields in such stirring words as these:

Yanker didel doodel down,
Didel dudel lanter;
Yanke viver voover vown,
Botermilk un tanther;

which means that if the lads and lassies reaped and gleaned faithfully they should be rewarded by a tenth of the grain, and an unlimited supply of buttermilk.

Afterward Yankee Doodle seems to have tired of pastoral life, for we find him in the midst of Roundhead and Cavalier upon the battle-fields of England during the Civil War. No doubt such a jolly comrade felt a tinge of sadness at the misfortunes of the unlucky Charles I., and he could not have found the long-faced Puritans, with their nasal voices, very good company for such a happy-go-lucky as himself. At any rate he never became an Englishman, and seems only to have paused in England while making up his mind where to settle down and spend his old

age. He probably made his first bow in America in 1775, and it is evident that he took a fancy to the new country, and was pleased, and perhaps flattered, by the reception he met. With his old abandon he threw himself heart and soul into the conflict, and became, in fact, the child of the Revolution. He was a leading spirit everywhere. Throwing all recollections of English hospitality to the winds, he chased the red coats at Bunker Hill, gave them a drubbing at Bennington, and remained bravely in the rear to watch their scouts while Washington retreated from Long Island. Many a time he was the sole support of the faithful few stationed to guard some important outpost; many a time he marched along with the old Continentals, grim and faithful, expecting every moment would reveal danger and perhaps death.

He crossed the Delaware with Washington on that eventful Christmas night, in 1775, though the Italian blood in him must have shrunk a little from the cold. He stood shoulder to shoulder with the great leader through all the misery and hopelessness of Valley Forge,

He was joyously welcomed by the soldiers in all their daring escapades when breaking loose from the restraints of camp life; and the women and children who had to remain home and suffer danger and privation alone, never saw his honest face without a smile.

Such devotion met with its reward. When the war was over the old veteran retired from the service with full military rank, and was brevetted an American citizen besides. It is pleasant to think that he has at last found a resting place among a people who will always honor and love him.

Two other ballads very popular at that time were *The Battle of Trenton* and *The Massacre of Wyoming*, while innumerable ones of lesser note were sung by fireside and camp-fire, all through the colonies.

In New York the first liberty pole raised in the country was planted by the Sons of Liberty, a band of patriotic Americans, who set it up again and again as it was cut down by the Tories, accompanying their work by singing every imaginable kind of ballad that would irritate the breast of the British sympathizers.

During the war of 1812, came the *Star Spangled Banner*, written to the accompaniment of shot and shell, while the author, Francis S. Key, was a prisoner on shipboard watching the bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British, in the harbor of Baltimore. The song was born in the darkness of a night of terrible anxiety, and when the dawn broke and found the flag still floating over the fort, an earnest of the victory to come, its triumphant measures seemed the fitting pæan of American liberty.

The ballad of the camps had developed into the national anthem.

CHAPTER II

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

1780—1851

In the days when Louisiana was a province of Spain a little dark-eyed boy used to wander among the fields and groves of his father's plantation studying with eager delight the works of nature around him.

Lying under the orange-trees watching the mocking-bird, or learning from his mother's lips the names of the flowers that grew in every corner of the plantation, he soon came to feel that he was part of that beautiful world, whose language was the songs of birds and whose boundaries extended to every place where a blossom lifted its head above the green sod. To him, as he said years afterward, the birds were playmates and the flowers dear friends, and before he could distinguish between the azure of the sky and the

emerald of the grass he had formed an intimacy with them so close and endearing that whenever removed from their presence he felt a loneliness almost unbearable. No other companions suited him so well, and no roof seemed so secure as that formed of the dense foliage under which the feathered tribes resorted, or the caves and rocks to which the curlew and cormorant retired to protect themselves from the fury of the tempest. In these words, recorded by himself, we read the first chapter of the life history of John James Audubon, the American naturalist and the author of one of the early classics of American literature.

In those early days his father was Audubon's teacher, and hand in hand they searched the groves for new specimens, or lingered over the nests where lay the helpless young. It was his father who taught him to look upon the shining eggs as 'flowers in the bud,' and to note the different characteristics which distinguished them. These excursions were seasons of joy, but when the time came for the birds to take their annual departure the joy was turned to sorrow. To the young naturalist a dead bird, though beautifully

preserved and mounted, gave no pleasure. It seemed but a mockery of life, and the constant care needed to keep the specimens in good condition brought an additional sense of loss. Was there no way in which the memory of these feathered friends might be kept fresh and beautiful? He writes that he turned in his anxiety to his father, who in answer laid before him a volume of illustrations. Audubon turned over the leaves with a new hope in his heart, and although the pictures were badly executed the idea satisfied him. Although he was unconscious of it, it was the moment of the birth of his own great life work. Pencil in hand he began to copy nature untiringly, although for a long time he produced what he himself called but a family of cripples, the sketches being burned regularly on his birthdays. But no failure could stop him. He made hundreds of sketches of birds every year, worthless almost in themselves because of bad drawing, but valuable as studies of nature.

Meantime for education the boy had been taken from Louisiana to France, the home of his father, who wished him to become a soldier,

sailor, or engineer. For a few hours daily Audubon studied mathematics, drawing, and geography, and then would disappear in the country, returning with eggs, nests, or curious plants. His rooms looked like a museum of natural history, while the walls were covered with drawings of French birds.

Learning mathematics with difficulty Audubon became easily proficient in fencing and dancing, and learned to play upon the violin, flute, flageolet, and guitar. His drawing lessons were his greatest delight, the great French artist, David, being his teacher and critic. Once, on the elder Audubon's return from a long sea-voyage, he was chagrined to find that although his son had probably the largest amateur natural-history collection in France, he had neglected his equations, angles, and triangles, and the lad was sent to his father's station, given one day to visit the ships and fortifications, and then set to the study of mathematics, and mathematics only.

For one year he wrestled with problems and theorems, counting himself happy if by any chance he could fly to the country for an hour to

take up his acquaintance with the birds; and then the father admitted his son's unfitness for military pursuits and sent him to America to take charge of some property.

Audubon was then seventeen years of age, and had but one ambition in life—to live in the woods with his wild friends. As his father's estate was rented by a very orderly minded Quaker there was little for Audubon to do except enjoy himself. Hunting, fishing, drawing, and studying English from a young English girl he afterward married, filled the day, while he never missed the balls and skating parties for which the neighborhood was famous. He was the best marksman in the region, able to bring down his quarry while riding at full speed. He was the best skater to be found; at balls and parties he was the amateur master of ceremonies, gayly teaching the newest steps and turns that obtained in France. In the hunt it was Audubon—dressed, perhaps, in satin breeches and pumps, for he was a great dandy—who led the way through the almost unbroken wilderness. Add to this that he was an expert swimmer, once swimming the

Schuylkill with a companion on his back; that he could play any one of half a dozen instruments for an impromptu dance; that he could plait a set of picnic dishes out of willow rushes; train dogs, and do a hundred other clever things, and it is easy to see why he was a general favorite.

His private rooms were turned into a museum. The walls were covered with festoons of birds' eggs, the shelves crowded with fishes, snakes, lizards, and frogs; the chimney displayed stuffed squirrels and opossums, and wherever there was room hung his own paintings of birds. It was the holiday of life for the young lover of nature, and he enjoyed it with good will.

Here the idea of his great work came to him as he was one day looking over his drawings and descriptions of birds. Suddenly, as it seemed to him, though his whole life had led to it, he conceived the plan of a great work on American ornithology. He began his gigantic undertaking as a master in the school of nature wherein he had been so faithful a student, for he now saw with joy that the past, which had often

seemed idle, had been in reality rich with labors that were to bear fruit.

He began at once to put his work into scientific form, and nothing better illustrates his energy and ambition than the fact that he entered on it alone and unaided, though none knew better than he the toil and ceaseless endeavor necessary for its completion. Except in a very immature form, American ornithology at that time did not exist; it was a region almost as unknown to human thought as the new world which Columbus discovered. Season after season, from the Gulf to Canada and back again, these winged creatures of the air wended their way, stopping to hatch and breed their young, becoming acquainted with Louisiana orange-groves and New England apple-orchards, now fluttering with kindly sociability round the dwellings of men and again seeking lonely eeries among inaccessible mountain tops, pursuing their course at all times almost without the thought and cognizance of man. It was Audubon who was the conqueror, if not the discoverer of this aërial world of song, of which he became the immortal his-

torian. It was his untiring zeal which gave thus early to American literature a scientific work of such vast magnitude and importance that it astonished the scientists of Europe and won for itself the fame of being the most gigantic biblical enterprise ever undertaken by a single individual. To do this meant a life of almost constant change, and Audubon can hardly have had an abiding place after his first serious beginning. The wide continent became his home and he found his dwelling wherever the winged tribes sought shelter from the wind and storm. His pursuit was often interrupted by occupations necessary for the support of his family, for at his father's death he had given to his sister his share of the estate and so became entirely dependent upon his own efforts for a livelihood; but at all times, no matter what his situation, his heart was in the wild retreats of nature. Travelling through the West and South in search of fortune as well as of specimens his experiences were often disenchanting. At Louisville and New Orleans he would be forced to make crayon portraits of the principal citizens in order

to raise the money for family expenses. Again he taught drawing; he served as tutor in private families, and in order to secure funds for the publication of his work he earned $2,000 by dancing lessons, the largest sum he had ever earned. Many business speculations enlisted Audubon's hopes, but all failed utterly. Once he embarked his money in a steam mill, which, being built in an unfit place, soon failed. At another time he bought a steamboat, which, proving an unlucky speculation, was sold to a shrewd buyer who never paid the purchase money. Again he was cheated in the clearing of a tract of timber. But his studies in natural history always went on. When he had no money to pay his passage up the Mississippi he bargained to draw the portrait of the captain of the steamer and his wife as remuneration. When he needed boots he obtained them by sketching the features of a friendly shoemaker, and more than once he paid his hotel bills, and saved something besides, by sketching the faces of the host and his family.

On the other hand, his adventures in search

of material for his work were romantic enough to satisfy the most ambitious traveller. From Florida to Labrador, and from the Atlantic to the then unknown regions of the Yellowstone he pursued his way, often alone, and not seldom in the midst of dangers which threatened life itself. He hunted buffalo with the Indians of the Great Plains, and lived for months in the tents of the fierce Sioux. He spent a season in the winter camp of the Shawnees, sleeping, wrapped in a buffalo robe, before the great camp-fire, and living upon wild turkey, bear's grease, and opossums. He made studies of deer, bears, and cougars, as well as of wild turkeys, prairie hens, and other birds. For days he drifted down the Ohio in a flat-bottomed boat, searching the uninhabited shores for specimens, and living the life of the frontiersman whose daily food must be supplied by his own exertions. Sometimes his studies would take him far into the dense forests of the West, where the white man had never before trod, and the only thing that suggested humanity would be the smoke rising miles away from the evening

camp-fire of some Indian hunter as lonely as himself.

Once as he lay stretched on the deck of a small vessel ascending the Mississippi he caught sight of a great eagle circling about his head. Convinced that it was a new species, he waited patiently for two years before he again had a glimpse of it, flying, in lazy freedom, above some butting crags where its young were nested. Climbing to the place, and watching like an Indian in ambush until it dropped to its nest, Audubon found it to be a sea-eagle. He named it the Washington Sea Eagle, in honor of George Washington. Waiting two years longer, he was able to obtain a specimen, from which he made the picture given in his work. This is but one example of the tireless patience with which he prosecuted his studies, years of waiting counting as nothing if he could but gain his end.

Some of his discoveries in this kingdom of the birds he relates with a romantic enthusiasm. Throughout the entire work there runs the note of warmest sympathy with the lives of these creatures of the air and sunshine. He tells us

of their hopes and loves and interests, from the time of the nest-making till the young have flown away. The freedom of bird life, its happiness, its experiences, and tragedies appeal to him as do those of humanity. The discovery of a new species is reported as rapturously as the news of a new star. Once in Labrador, when he was making studies of the eggers, his son brought to him a great hawk captured on the precipice far above his head. To Audubon's delight, it was that rare specimen, the gerfalcon, which had heretofore eluded all efforts of naturalists. While the rain dripped down from the rigging above, Audubon sat for hours making a sketch of this bird and feeling as rich as if he had discovered some rare gem.

After twenty years the work was published. Every specimen, from the tiny humming-bird to the largest eagles and vultures, was sketched life size and colored in the tints of nature. There were four hundred and seventy-five of these plates, furnishing a complete history of the feathered tribes of North America, for they showed not only the appearance of the birds but

represented also the manners and home life of this world of song. The humming-bird poised before the crimson throat of the trumpet flower, the whippoorwill resting among the leaves of the oak, the bobolink singing among the crimson flowers of the swamp maples, the snow-bird chirping cheerily among the snow-touched berries of the holly, were not sketches merely but bits of story out of bird history. So also are those pictures of the swan among the reeds of the Great Lakes, of the great white heron seizing its prey from the waters of the Gulf, and of the golden eagle winging its way toward the distant heights that it inhabits.

The work was published by subscription in London in 1829 under the title, "The Birds of North America." The price was eighty guineas. Later on a smaller and cheaper edition was issued. The work now is very rare. Audubon had the gratification of knowing that his labors were understood and appreciated by the world of science. When he exhibited his plates in the galleries of England and France, whither he went to obtain subscriptions, crowds flocked to see them, and

the greatest scientists of the age welcomed him to their ranks. *The Birds of America* was his greatest work, though he was interested somewhat in general zoölogy and wrote on other subjects.

Audubon died in New York in 1851. The great zoölogist Cuvier called *The Birds of North America* the most magnificent monument that art has ever erected to ornithology. The Scotch naturalist Wilson said that the character of Audubon was just what might have been expected from the author of such a work, brave, enthusiastic, self-sacrificing, and capable of heroic endurance.

CHAPTER III

WASHINGTON IRVING

1783–1859

"Left his lodging some time ago and has not been heard of since, a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of Knickerbocker. . . . Any information concerning him will be thankfully received."

Such was the curious advertisement that appeared in the *Evening Post* under the date of October 26, 1809, attracting the attention of all New York. People read it as they sat at supper, talked of it afterward around their wood fires, and thought of it again and again before they fell asleep at night. And yet not a soul knew the missing old gentleman or had ever heard of him before. Still he was no stranger to them, for he was a Knickerbocker, and every-

one was interested in the Knickerbockers, and everyone felt almost as if a grandfather or great-grandfather had suddenly come back to life and disappeared again still more suddenly without a word of explanation.

Those who could remember their childhood sent their wits back into the past and gathered up memories of these old Knickerbockers. They saw the old burghers again walking through the streets dressed in their long-waisted coats with skirts reaching nearly to the ankles, and wearing so solemnly their low-crowned beaver hats, while their small swords dangled by their sides to show their importance. They saw their wives in their close-fitting muslin caps, with their dress-skirts left open to show their numerous petticoats of every color, their gay stockings, and their low-cut, high-heeled shoes. They entered the quaint gabled houses made of brick brought from Holland, and sat in the roomy kitchen whose floor had just been sprinkled with sand brought from Coney Island, and on whose walls hung deer antlers and innumerable Dutch pipes. They passed into the parlor, whose chief orna-

ment was the carved bedstead upon which reposed two great feather-beds covered with a patch-work quilt. They sat in the fireplace and drank from the huge silver tankard while listening to stories of Indian warfare. In the streets they saw groups of Indians standing before the shop windows, and passed by the walls of the old fort wherein cows, pigs, and horses were feeding. They noticed the queerly rigged ships in the bay, the windmills scattered everywhere, and the canal passing right through the town and filled with Dutch canal boats. They saw the Dutch maidens standing around the ponds washing the family linen, and visited the bowerie or country house of some honest burgher, and sat with him in his little garden where cabbages and roses flourished side by side.

Such were the scenes that the strange advertisement called up, and more than one New Yorker dreamed that night that he was a child again, living over those long past days.

For some time nothing was heard of Diedrich Knickerbocker, and then another advertisement appeared in the *Post* saying he had been seen

twice on the road to Albany. Some time again elapsed, and finally the paper stated that the landlord of the inn at which he stopped gave up hope of ever seeing his guest again, and declared that he should sell the manuscript of a book that Mr. Knickerbocker had left behind and take the proceeds in payment of his bill. People were really excited about the fate of the old gentleman, and one of the city officials was upon the point of offering a reward for his discovery when a curious thing happened. It was found that there was no old gentleman by the name of Knickerbocker who had wandered away from his lodging; that there was no inn at which he had lived, and no manuscript he had left behind, and that in fact, Mr. Knickerbocker was simply the hero of a book which the author had taken this clever means of advertising. The book claimed to be the true history of the discovery and settlement of New York, and began with an account of the creation of the world, passing on to the manners, customs, and historical achievements of the old Hollanders from their first voyage in the celebrated ark the

Good Vrow, to the shores of New Jersey. Here we read how, as the Indians were given to long talks and the Dutch to long silences, they had no trouble about the settlement of the land, but all lived peacefully together. How Oloffe Van Kortlandt took his perilous journey from New Jersey as far north as Harlem and decided to build a city on Manhattan Island. Then we read of the golden reign of the first Dutch governor, Wouter Van Twiller, who was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference, and who ate four hours a day, smoked eight, and slept twelve, and so administered the affairs of the colony that it was a marvel of prosperity. Next we hear of Governor Keift, of lofty descent, since his father was an inspector of windmills—how his nose turned up and his mouth turned down, how his legs were the size of spindles, and how he grew tougher and tougher with age so that before his death he looked a veritable mummy. And then we see the redoubtable Peter Stuyvesant stumping around on his wooden leg adorned with silver reliefs and follow him in his expedition against

the neighboring Swedish colonies, when the entire population of the city thronged the streets and balconies to wave farewell to him as he left, and to welcome his return as a victorious conqueror. Lastly we see him, furious with rage, menacing the British fleet which has come to take possession of the town, threatening vengeance dire upon the English king, and still cherishing his wrath with fiery bravery when the enemy finally occupy the old Dutch town and proceed to transform it into an English city. The book was read with interest, admiration, or amazement as the case might be. Some said it appeared too light and amusing for real history, others claimed that it held stores of wisdom that only the wise could understand; others still complained that the author was no doubt making fun of their respectable ancestors and had written the book merely to hold them up to ridicule. Only a few saw that it was the brightest, cleverest piece of humor that had yet appeared in America, and that its writer had probably a career of fame before him.

The author was Washington Irving, then a

young man in his twenty-seventh year and already known as the writer of some clever newspaper letters, and of a series of humorous essays published in a semi-monthly periodical called *Salmagundi.*

Irving was born in New York on April 3, 1783, and was named after George Washington. The Revolution was over, but the treaty of peace had not yet been signed, and the British army still remained in the city, which had been half burned down during the war.

New York was then a small town, with a population of about one seven-hundredth of what it now has; beyond the town limits were orchards, farms, country houses, and the high road leading to Albany, along which the stage coach passed at regular times. There were no railroads, and Irving was fourteen years old before the first steam-boat puffed its way up the Hudson River, frightening the country people into the belief that it was an evil monster come to devour them. All travelling was done by means of sailing vessels, stage coaches, or private conveyances; all letters were carried by the stage-coach, and every

one cost the sender or receiver twenty-five cents for postage. The telegraph was undreamed of, and if any one had hinted the possibility of talking to some one else a thousand miles away over a telephone wire he would have been considered a lunatic, or possibly a witch. In fact New York was a quiet, unpretentious little town, whose inhabitants were still divided into English or Dutch families according to their descent, and in whose households were found the customs of England and Holland in full force. In Irving's family, however, there was doubtless greater severity practised in daily life than in the neighboring households. The father was a Scotch Presbyterian who considered life a discipline, who thought all amusement a waste of precious time, and who made the children devote one out of the two half weekly holidays to the study of the catechism. They were also obliged to attend church three times every Sunday, and to spend any spare moments left in reading some religious book, a discipline which had such an effect upon Irving that, to avoid becoming a Presbyterian, he went secretly to Trinity Church and was confirmed.

Naturally Irving's love of fun was sedulously hid from such a father, and, as fun he must have, he sought amusement outside his own home. Forbidden to attend the theatre, he would risk his neck nightly by climbing out of his window to visit the play for an hour or so, and then rush home in terror lest his absence had been discovered and his future fun imperilled. Many a night when sent early to bed he would steal away across the adjacent roofs to send a handful of stones clattering down the wide, old-fashioned chimney of some innocent neighbor, who would start from his dreams to imagine robbers, spooks, or other unpleasant visitors in his bed-chamber; and often when Irving was supposed to be fast asleep he was far away in the midst of a group of truant boys concocting some scheme of mischief which was meant to startle the neighborhood and bring no end of fun to the daring perpetrators.

Irving went to school kept by an old Revolutionary soldier, with whom he was a great favorite and who always called him *General.* He was not particularly brilliant in his studies, but he distinguished himself as an actor in the tragedies

which the boys gave at times in the school-room; at ten years of age he was the star of the company, which did not even lose respect for him when once, being called suddenly upon the stage through a mistake, he appeared with his mouth full of honey-cake, which he was obliged to swallow painfully while the audience roared at the situation. Afterward, when he rushed around the stage flourishing a wooden sabre, he was not a tragedian to be trifled with. The glory of it even paid him for the cruelty of having to run away to see a real play.

It was a favorite amusement with him after school to wander down to the wharves, where he would spend hours in watching the ships load and unload, and dream of the day when he, too, should visit those beautiful regions that lay only in reach of their white sails; for, fond as he was of boyish sports, he was much given to day-dreams, and the romantic past of the old world held a great charm for him. His favorite books were "Robinson Crusoe," "The Arabian Nights," "Gulliver's Travels," and all stories of adventure and travel. The world beyond the sea

seemed a fairyland to him ; a little print of London Bridge and another of Kensington Gardens, that hung up in his bed-room, stirred his heart wistfully, and he fairly envied the odd-looking old gentlemen and ladies who appeared to be loitering around the arches of St. John's Gate, as shown in a cut on the cover of an old magazine.

Later his imagination was also kindled by short excursions to the then wild regions of the Hudson and Mohawk valleys. Drifting up the Hudson in a little sloop, day after day the picturesque beauty of the Highlands and Catskills impressed itself more deeply upon him, while his mind dwelt fondly upon the traditions which still lingered around the mountains and rivers forever associated with the struggles of the early settlers. Years afterward we find the remembrance of these days gracing with loving touch the pages of some of his choicest work, and it is this power of sympathy, so early aroused, that gives Irving one of his greatest charms as a writer, and makes the period of which he writes seem as real as if a part of to-day.

At seventeen Irving left school and began to study for the bar. But his health, which had always been delicate, made it necessary for him to take a long rest from study, and he accordingly left America for two years of travel abroad. He visited England, France, and Italy, taking great delight in seeing those lands he had so often dreamed of, in meeting the famous people of the day, and, above all, in indulging in frequent visits to the theatre and opera, becoming in this way acquainted with all the great singers and actors whose reputation had reached America. It was after his return home that he brought out his Knickerbocker history, a work which made him so famous that when he returned to England some time afterward he found himself very well known in the best literary circles. The results of this second visit are found in the volumes comprising *Geoffrey Crayon's Sketch Book*, *Bracebridge Hall*, *Tales of a Traveller* and other miscellany, in which occur charming descriptions of English country life, delightful ghost stories, the famous description of an English Christmas, the immortal legend of *Rip Van Winkle*,

and an account of a visit to the haunts of Robin Hood, whose exploits had so fascinated him as a boy that he once spent his entire holiday money to obtain a copy of his adventures.

Abbotsford is an account of a visit that Irving paid to Sir Walter Scott. It is a charming revelation of the social side of Scott's character, who welcomed Irving as a younger brother in art, became his guide in his visit to Yarrow and Melrose Abbey, and took long rambling walks with him all around the country made so famous by the great novelist. Irving recalled as among the most delightful hours of his life those walks over the Scottish hills with Scott, who was described by the peasantry as having "an awfu' knowledge of history," and whose talk was full of the folk-lore, poetry, and superstitions that made up the interest of the place.

In the evening they sat in the drawing-room, while Scott, with a great hound, Maida, at his feet, read to them a scrap of old poetry or a chapter from King Arthur, or told some delightful bit of peasant fairy lore, like that of the black cat who, on hearing one shepherd tell another of

having seen a number of cats dressed in mourning following a coffin, sprang up the chimney in haste, exclaiming: "Then I am king of the cats," and vanished to take possession of his vacant kingdom. From this time Irving's life was one of constant literary labor for many years, all of which were spent abroad. His works on the companions of Columbus, and the Alhambra, were written during his residence in Spain, where he had access to the national archives and where he became as familiar with the life of the people as it was possible for a stranger to become. He was at home both in the dignified circles of higher life and among the picturesque and simple peasantry, whose characteristics he draws with such loving grace.

After seventeen years' absence Irving returned to America, where he was welcomed as one who had won for his country great honors. He was the first writer to make American literature respected abroad, and his return was made the occasion of numerous fêtes given in his honor in New York and other cities. He now built Sunnyside, on the Hudson, the home that he loved so dearly and

that will ever be famous as the abode of America's first great writer.

His principal works following the Spanish histories were *Astoria*, the history of the fur-trading company in Oregon founded by the head of the Astor family; *Captain Bonneville*, the adventures of a hunter in the far West; the *Life of Goldsmith* and the *Lives of Mahomet and His Successors*.

He returned to Spain in 1842 as ambassador, and remained four years. In the *Legends of the Conquest of Spain* Irving tells the story of the conquest of Spain by the Moors, as related in the old Spanish and Moorish chronicles. The pages are full of the spirit of the warfare of the middle ages. Here we see the great Arab chieftain, Taric, the one-eyed, with a handful of men cruising along the Spanish coast to spy out its strength and weakness, and finally making a bold dash inland to capture and despoil a city and return to Africa laden with plunder to report the richness of the land. "Behold!" writes Taric's chief in a letter to the Caliph, "a land that equals Syria in its soil, Arabia in its tem-

perature, India in its flowers and spices, and Cathay in its precious stones."

And at this news the Caliph wrote back in haste that God was great, and that it was evidently his will that the infidel should perish, and bade the Moors go forward and conquer.

In these delightful chapters we follow Taric in his conquests from the taking of the rock of Calpe, henceforth called from him Gibraltar, the rock of Taric, to the final overthrow of the Christians and the establishment of the Moorish supremacy in Spain.

The whole story is a brilliant, living picture of that romantic age. The Spanish king goes to battle wearing robes of gold brocade, sandals embroidered with gold and diamonds, and a crown studded with the costliest jewels of Spain. He rides in a chariot of ivory, and a thousand cavaliers knighted by his own hand surround him, while tens of thousands of his brave soldiers follow him, guarding the sacred banners emblazoned with the cross. The Moorish vanguard, riding the famous horses of Arabia, advance to the sound of trumpet and cymbal, their gay robes

and snowy turbans and their arms of burnished gold and steel glittering in the sunshine, which reflects in every direction the sacred crescent, the symbol of their faith. The surroundings are equally picturesque and romantic. The famous plain of Granada, adorned with groves and gardens and winding streams, and guarded by the famous Mountains of the Sun and Air, forms the foreground to the picture, while in the distance we see the gloomy mountain passes, the fortified rocks and castles, and the great walled cities, through which the Moors passed, always victorious and never pausing until their banners floated from every cliff and tower.

Scattered through the narrative of battles and sieges we find also many legends that abounded at that time both in the Moslem and Christian faiths, translated with such fidelity from the old chroniclers that they retain all the supernatural flavor of the original. Here we learn how Arab and Christian alike beheld portents, saw visions, received messages from the spirits, and were advised, encouraged, and comforted by signs and warnings from heaven, the whole nar-

rative being most valuable as presenting in fine literary form the every-day life and intense religious fervor of the soldier of the middle ages.

For eight hundred years the Moors held Spain. They built beautiful cities and palaces, the remains of which are marvels to this day; they made the plain of Granada a garden of flowers; they preserved classical literature when the rest of Europe was sunk in ignorance; they studied the sciences, and had great and famous schools, which were attended by the youth of all nations; they rescued the Jewish people from the oppression of the Spaniards, and made them honorable citizens; and they impressed upon their surroundings an art so beautiful that its influence has extended throughout Christendom. Their occupation of Spain at that time probably did more for the preservation of literature, science, and art than any other event in history.

In his chapters on the Alhambra, the beauties of that celebrated palace, the favorite abode of the Moorish kings, is described by Irving as seen by him during a visit in 1829. Even at that date, nearly four hundred years after its

seizure by the Spaniards, the Alhambra retained much of its original magnificence. The great courts, with their pavements of white marble, and fountains bordered with roses, the archways, balconies, and halls decorated with fretwork and filigree and incrusted with tiles of the most exquisite design; the gilded cupolas and panels of lapis lazuli, and the carved lions supporting the alabaster basins of the fountains, all appealed to Irving so strongly that when he first entered the palace it seemed, he relates, as if he had been transported into the past and was living in an enchanted realm.

Irving remained some months in the Alhambra, living over again the scenes of Moorish story, and so catching the spirit of the lost grandeur of the old palace, that his descriptions read like a bit of genuine Arabian chronicle, which had been kept safe until then in the grim guardianship of the past.

The chapters of the *Alhambra* are also full of delightful legends, the fairy tales which time had woven around the beautiful ruin, and which the custodians of the place related gravely to Irving

as genuine history. It calls up a pleasant picture to think of Irving sitting in the stately hall or in his balcony, listening to one of these old tales from the lips of his tattered but devoted domestic, while the twilight was gathering and the nightingale singing in the groves and gardens beneath.

He himself said that it was the realization of a day-dream which he had cherished since the time when, in earliest boyhood on the banks of the Hudson, he had pored over the story of Granada.

In his work, *The Conquest of Granada*, Irving relates the story of the retaking of Granada by Ferdinand and Isabella, during a war which lasted ten years and which held nothing but disaster for the Moors. Ferdinand and Isabella took the field with an army composed of the nobles of Spain and their followers, and which represented the chivalry of Europe, for all Christendom hastened to espouse the holy cause of driving the infidel from the land. The Spanish camps glittered with the burnished armor and gold-embroidered banners of foreign knights;

and whether on the march, in the field, or in camp, the whole pageant of the war as depicted by Irving passes before our eyes like a brilliant panorama. We see the Moorish king looking down from the towers of the Alhambra upon the plains once green and blooming but now desolate with fire and sword by the hand of Ferdinand. We follow the Moors as they rush from their walls in one of their splendid but hopeless sallies, to return discomfited, and hear the wail of the women and old men—"Woe! woe! to Granada, for its strong men shall fall by the sword and its maidens be led into captivity." We watch the Spaniards, tireless in endeavor, building the fortified city of Santa Fé, the city of holy faith, to take the place of the camp destroyed by fire, and which has remained famous as the place where Columbus received from Isabella his commission to sail westward until India was reached. And in the end we see the Moors in their retreat looking sadly from the hill which is called to this day, The Last Sigh of the Moor, upon the beautiful valley and mountains lost to them forever.

So graphically is the scene described that Irving must ever remain the historian of the Moors of Spain, whose spirit seemed to inspire the beautiful words in which he celebrated their conquests, their achievements, and their defeats.

A favorite among Irving's books was the *Life of Washington*, based upon the correspondence of the great statesman. It is an appreciative story of the life work of Washington, written by one whose own work connected the past and present, and who, as a child, had felt the hand of the nation's hero laid upon his head in blessing.

In the *Chronicle of Wolfert's Roost* Irving follows in imagination old Diedrich Knickerbocker into the famous region of Sleepy Hollow, where much of the material for the celebrated Knickerbocker's History was said to have been collected. This chronicle, it was claimed, was written upon the identical old Dutch writing desk that Diedrich used; the elbow chair was the same that he sat in; the clock was the very one he consulted so often during his long hours of composition. In these pages old Diedrich

walks as a real person and Irving follows him with faithful step through the region that he loved so fondly all his life.

Everything here is dwelt upon with lingering touch; the brooks and streams, the meadows and cornfields, the orchards and gardens, and the groves of beech and chestnut have each their tribute from the pen of one who found their charms ever fresh, who sought in them rest and happiness, and who came back to them lovingly to spend the last days of his life in their familiar companionship.

Irving died in 1859 and was buried at Sunnyside, in sight of the Hudson whose legends he had immortalized and whose beauty never ceased to charm him from the moment it first captivated his heart in his boyhood days.

CHAPTER IV

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

1789–1851

The region of Otsego Lake, New York, was at the last of the eighteenth century a wilderness. Here and there rose a little clearing, the birthplace of a future village, but westward the primeval forest extended for miles around the little lake, which reflected the shadows of wooded hills on every side. Here roved deer, wolves, panthers, and bears unmolested in the green depths and following the same runways which their species had trodden for centuries. Here also lurked the red man, suspicious and cautious and ever ready to revenge on the white man the wrongs of his race.

In this beautiful spot lived the boy, James Fenimore Cooper, in the family mansion built by his father and named Otsego Hall, the start-

ing point of the now famous village of Cooperstown. It was a fitting home for the boy who was hereafter to immortalize the Indian race in the pages of fiction. His life was almost as simple as that of the Indian lads who roamed through the forest fishing and hunting and knowing no ambition beyond.

The little hamlet lay far away from the highways of travel. The nearest villages were miles distant and only to be reached on foot or on horseback through miles of unbroken forest. A visitor was rare, and meant perhaps a warning that the Indians were on the war-path. Occasionally a new settler drifted into the little valley, and the village grew slowly through the lad's boyhood, Otsego Hall keeping its dignity as the Manor House. Sometimes a visitor of note brought news of the great political troubles in Europe, and thus Cooper met many men of distinction whose visits seemed to bring the great world very close to the little settlement. This glimpse of a broader life, with attendance at the village school and an intimate companionship with nature, made up his early education.

It was not bad training for the future novelist. The acquaintanceship of celebrated men widened his horizon and fed his imagination; his daily life kept his mind fresh and active with the spirit that was fast turning the uninhabited regions of the frontier into busy settlements; and the familiar intercourse with nature kept pure the springs of poetry that lie in every child's heart. He learned wood-lore as the young Indian learned it, face to face with the divinities of the forest. He knew the calls of the wild animals far across the gloomy wilderness. He could follow the deer and bear to their secluded haunts. He could retrace the path of the retreating wolf by the broken cobwebs glistening in the early sunlight; and the cry of the panther high overhead in the pines and hemlocks was a speech as familiar as his own tongue. When he was thirsty he made a hunter's cup of leaves and drank in the Indian fashion. When fatigued he lay down to rest with that sense of security that comes only to the forest bred. When thoughtful he could learn from the lap of the waves against the shore, the murmur of leaves, and the

rustle of wings, those lessons which nature teaches in her quiet moods.

These experiences and impressions sank into Cooper's heart, and were re-lived again long after in the pages of his romances.

While still a boy Cooper went to Albany to study, and in 1803 entered Yale College, at the age of thirteen.

He played as much and studied as little as he possibly could, and the first year's preparation perhaps accounts for his dismissal from college in his junior year. This in turn led to a life much more to his liking. His father took his part in the trouble at Yale, but was now anxious to see his son embarked on the serious business of life. Both father and son liked the idea of a naval career for the boy, and it was decided that Cooper should go to sea. He left New York in the autumn of 1806 on a vessel of the merchant marine. There was then no Naval Academy in America, and a boy could fit himself for entering the navy as an officer only by serving before the mast. Cooper was away nearly a year, his ship, the Sterling, visiting London, Portu-

gal, and Spain, carrying cargoes from one port to another in the leisurely manner of the merchant sailing-vessels of that day. It was a time of peculiar interest to all seamen, and his mind was keenly alive to the new life around him. The English were expecting a French invasion, and the Channel was full of ships of war, while every southern port was arming for defence. The Mediterranean was terrorized by the Barbary pirates, who, under cover of night, descended upon any unprotected merchant vessel, stole the cargo, scuttled the ship, and sold the crew into slavery, to Tripolitan and Algerine husbandmen, whose orchards of date and fig were cultivated by many an American or English slave.

Cooper saw all this and remembered it, being even then a student of men and events. His work was hard and dangerous; he was never admitted to the cabin of the ship; in storm or wind his place was on the deck among the rough sailors, who were his only companions. But this training developed the good material that was in him, and when in 1808 he received his

commission as midshipman he was well equipped for his duties.

Cooper remained in the navy three years and a half. He spent part of this time at the port of Oswego, Lake Ontario, superintending the building of a war vessel, the Oneida, intended for the defence of the Canadian frontier in case of a war with England. The days passed in this wild region were not fruitless, for here in the solitude of the primeval forest Cooper found later the background of a famous story. It was the land of the red man, and during the long winter months of his residence there Cooper dwelt in spirit with the wild natives, though he little dreamed that he was to be the historian that would give the story of their lives to a succeeding generation. Cooper saw no active service during the time, and resigned his commission on his marriage.

Several succeeding years were passed partly in Westchester County, his wife's former home, and partly in Cooperstown. Here he began the erection of a stone dwelling, in Fenimore, a suburb of the old village. While living at Scars-

dale, Westchester County, N. Y., he had produced his first book. Already thirty years old, a literary career was far from his thoughts. This first novel was merely the result of a challenge springing from a boast. Reading a dull tale of English life to his wife, he declared that he could write a better story himself, and as a result produced a tale in two volumes, called *Precaution.* It was founded upon English society life, and it obtained some favorable notices from English papers. But it showed no real talent. But in the next year, 1821, he published a story foreshadowing his fame and striking a new note in American literature. At that time Americans still cherished stirring memories of the Revolution. Men and women could still recall the victories of Bunker Hill and Trenton, and the disasters of Monmouth and Long Island.

Cooper's own first impressions of life were vivid with the patriotism that beat at fever heat during his youth, when the birth of American independence was within the recollection of many. In choosing a subject for fiction Cooper therefore naturally turned to the late struggle,

and American literature owes him a large debt for thus throwing into literary form the spirit of those thrilling times. This novel, *The Spy*, was founded upon the story of a veritable spy who had been employed by the Revolutionary officer who related to Cooper some of his daring adventures. Taking this scout for a hero Cooper kept the scene in Westchester and wove from a few facts the most thrilling piece of fiction that had yet appeared in the United States. The novel appeared in December, 1821, and in a few months it had made Cooper famous both in America and Europe. It was published in England by the firm which had brought out Irving's *Sketch Book*, and it met with a success that spoke highly for its merit, since the story described English defeat and American triumphs. The translator of the Waverley novels made a French version, and before long the book appeared in several other European tongues, while its hero, Harvey Birch, won and has kept for himself an honorable place in literature.

Cooper had now found his work, and he continued to illustrate American life in fiction.

His most popular books are the *Leather Stocking Tales* and his novels of the sea. The *Leather Stocking Tales* consist of five stories, *The Deerslayer*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pathfinder*, *The Pioneers*, and *The Prairie*, concerning the same hero, Leatherstocking.

In *The Deerslayer* the hero of the series makes his appearance as a youth of German descent whose parents had settled near a clan of the Mohegans on the Schoharie River. At a great Indian feast he receives the name Deerslayer from the father of Chingachgook, his Indian boy friend, and the story is an account of his first war-path. The tale was suggested to the author one afternoon as he paused for a moment while riding to gaze over the lake he so loved, and whose shores, as he looked, seemed suddenly to be peopled with the figures of a vanished race. As the vision faded he turned to his daughter and said that he must write a story about the little lake, and thus the idea of Deerslayer was born. In a few days the story was begun. The scene is laid on Otsego Lake, and in the tale are incorporated many tender memories of Cooper's

own boyhood. It portrays Leatherstocking as a young scout just entering manhood, and embodies some of the author's best work. Perhaps no one was so well-fitted to illustrate the ideal friendship between Deerslayer and Chingachgook as he, who in his boyhood stood many a time beside the lakeside as the shadows fell over the forest, not knowing whether the faint crackling of the bushes meant the approach of the thirsty deer, or signalled the presence of some Indian hunter watching with jealous eye the white intruder.

In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Leatherstocking, under the name Hawkeye, is represented in the prime of manhood, his adventures forming some of the most exciting events of the series. Here his old friend Chingachgook and the latter's son Uncas follow Deerslayer hand in hand, and make, next to the hero, the principal characters of the story, the scene of which is laid near Lake Champlain during the trouble between the French and English for the possession of Canada.

In *The Pathfinder* the famous scout, under

the name which gives the title to the book, is carried still further in his adventurous career. The scene is laid near Lake Ontario where Cooper spent some months while in the navy. These three tales are not only the finest of the series from a literary standpoint, but they illustrate as well the life of those white men of the forest who lived as near to nature as the Indian himself and whose deeds helped make the history of the country in its beginnings.

The Pioneers finds Leatherstocking an old hunter living on Otsego Lake at the time of its first settlement by the whites. The character was suggested by an old hunter of the regions who in Cooper's boyhood came frequently to the door of his father's house to sell the game he had killed. The hero is in this book called Natty Bumppo and the story is one of the primitive life of the frontiersmen of that period. Their occupations, interests and ambitions form the background to the picture of Leatherstocking, the rustic philosopher, who has finished the most active part of his career, and who has gathered from nature some of her sweetest les-

sons. Many of the scenes in the book are transcriptions from the actual life of those hardy pioneers who joined Cooper's father in the settlement of Cooperstown, while the whole is tinged with that tender reminiscence of the author's youth which sets it apart from the rest though it is, perhaps, the least perfect story of the series.

Leatherstocking closes his career in *The Prairie*, a novel of the plains of the great West, whither he had gone to spend his last days. It is the story of the lonely life of the trapper of those days, whose love of solitude has led him far from the frontier, and whose dignified death fitly closes his courageous life. It is supposed that the actual experiences of Daniel Boone suggested this ending to the series.

The story of the war of the frontiersmen with nature, with circumstances and with the red man is told in these books. It is the romance of real history and Leatherstocking was but the picture of many a brave settler whose deeds were unrecorded and whose name remains unknown. Side by side with Leatherstocking stand those Indian characters which the genius of Cooper immor

talized and which have passed into history as typical.

Cooper began the tales without any thought of making a series, but the overwhelming success of *The Pioneers*, the first which appeared, led him to produce book after book until the whole life of the hero was illustrated.

Cooper's series of sea novels began with *The Pilot*, published in 1824. It followed *The Pioneers*, and showed the novelist to be equally at home on sea and land. In his stories of frontier life, Cooper followed the great Scott, whose thrilling tales of Border life and of early English history had opened a new domain to the novelist. Cooper always acknowledged his debt to the great *Wizard of the North*, and, indeed, spoke of himself as a chip of Scott's block. But in his sea stories Cooper was a creator. He was the first novelist to bring into fiction the ordinary, every-day life of the sailor afloat, whether employed on a peaceful merchant vessel or fighting hand to hand in a naval battle. And it is interesting to know that the creation of the sea story was another debt that he owed to Scott, though

in a far different way. Scott's novel, *The Pirate*, had been criticised by Cooper as the work of a man who had never been at sea. And to prove it the work of a landsman he began his own story, *The Pilot*. The time chosen is that of the Revolution, and the hero is the famous adventurer John Paul Jones, introduced under another name. It was so new a thing to use the technicalities of ship life, and to describe the details of an evolution in a naval battle, that, familiar as he was with ocean life, Cooper felt some doubts of his success. To test his power he read one day to an old shipmate that now famous account of the passage of the ship through the narrow channel. The effect was all that Cooper hoped. The old sailor fell into a fury of excitement, paced up and down the room, and in his eagerness for a moment lived over again a stormy scene in his own life. Satisfied with this experiment Cooper finished the novel in content.

The Pilot met with an instant success both in America and Europe. As it was his first, so it is, perhaps, his best sea story. Into it he put

all the freshness of reminiscence, all the haunting memories of ocean life that had followed him since his boyhood. It was biographical in the same sense as *The Pioneers*. A part of the romance of childhood drafted into the reality of after life.

The Red Rover, the next sea story, came out in 1828. By that time other novelists were writing tales of the sea, but they were mere imitations of *The Pilot*. In *The Red Rover* the genuine adventures of the sailor class were again embodied in the thrilling narrative that Cooper alone knew how to write, and this book has always been one of the most popular of novels.

The Red Rover, so called because of his red beard, and whose name gives the title to the book, is a well born Englishman who has turned pirate, and whose daring adventures have made him famous along the coasts of America, Europe and Africa. The scene opens in the harbor of Newport in the days when that town was the most important port of the Atlantic coast, and from there is carried to the high seas, whereon is

fought that famous last sea fight of the Red Rover, the description of which forms one of Cooper's best efforts.

Wing and Wing is a tale of the Mediterranean during the exciting days of privateers and pirates in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The great admiral, Nelson, is introduced in this book, which abounds with incidents of the tropical seas and reflects much of Cooper's experience during his apprenticeship on the Sterling. The story is one of Cooper's masterpieces, and, like so much of his work, has preserved in literature a phase of life that has forever passed away.

In *The Two Admirals* is introduced, for the first time in fiction, a description of the evolution of great fleets in action. The scene is taken from English history, and in many instances the story shows Cooper at his best.

The Water Witch, and *Ned Myers, or Life Before the Mast*, a biography almost of Cooper's own early life at sea, must be included among the tales which illustrate the author's genius as a writer of tales of the sea.

Nothing can be more different than the picture of Leatherstocking and his Indian friends in the forest retreats of nature and that of the reckless sailor race which found piracy and murder the only outcome for their fierce ambitions. Yet both are touched with the art of a master, and both illustrate Cooper's claim as one of the greatest masters of fiction.

Besides his *Leather Stocking Tales* and the sea stories Cooper wrote novels, sketches of travel, essays on the social and political condition of America, and innumerable pamphlets in answer to attacks made upon him by adverse critics. But his rank in American literature will ever be determined by the *Leather Stocking Tales* and his best sea stories. His place is similar to that of Scott in English literature, while he enjoys also the reputation of having opened a new and enchanted realm of fiction.

Next to Hawthorne, he will long be held, probably, the greatest novelist that America has produced. With the exception of seven years abroad, Cooper spent his life in his native land. While in Europe he wrote some of his best novels, and

though he grew to love the old world he never wavered in his devotion to America.

Cooper's popularity abroad was equalled only by that of Scott. His works were translated and sold even in Turkey, Persia, Egypt and Jerusalem in the language of those countries. It was said by a traveller that the middle classes of Europe had gathered all their knowledge of American history from Cooper's works and that they had never understood the character of American independence until revealed by this novelist. In spite of defects of style and the poor quality of some of his stories, Cooper has given to fiction many creations that must live as long as literature endures.

He died in his sixty-second year at Cooperstown.

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

1794–1878

William Cullen Bryant was born in 1794 in a log farmhouse in the beautiful Berkshire Hills of Western Massachusetts. His father was the country doctor and the child was named after a celebrated physician. He began his school days in a log school-house beside a little brook that crept down from the hills and went singing on its way to the valley.

All around stood the great forest-covered hills, haunted by wolves, bears, deer and wild-cats, which occasionally crept down even to the settlements carrying terror to the hearts of the women and children. Wherever the slopes were cleared, the farm lands had taken possession, the forest often creeping up close to the little homes.

From the door-yard of the Bryant homestead

the whole world seemed to be made up of hills and forest, and fertile fields, while in the woods grew the exquisite New England wild flowers, the laurel and azalea, the violet, the tiger lily, and the fringed gentian. Here also lived the summer birds of New England, the robins, the blue bird and the thrush, haunting the woods from early spring until late autumn.

All these sights and sounds sunk into the boy's heart and made themselves into a poem which he wrote down in words many years after, and which is as clear and fresh as the voice of the little brook itself after which it was named. This poem is called *The Rivulet* and it shows the poet-child standing upon the banks of the little stream listening to the song of the birds or gathering wild flowers.

It was his first lesson in that wonder-book of nature from which he translated so much that was beautiful that he became the distinctive poet of the woods and streams.

Lessons from books he learned in the little log school-house, preparing himself for ordeals when the minister came to visit the school. At

these times the pupils were dressed in their best and sat in solemn anxiety while the minister asked them questions out of the catechism and made them a long speech on morals and good behavior. On one of these occasions the ten-year-old poet declaimed some of his own verses descriptive of the school.

In Bryant's boyhood New England farm life was very simple. The farmers lived in log or slab houses, whose kitchens formed the living room, where the meals were generally taken. Heat was supplied by the great fireplaces that sometimes filled one whole side of the kitchen and were furnished with cranes, spits, and pot-hooks. Behind the kitchen door hung a bundle of birch rods with which mischievous boys were kept in order, and in the recess of the chimney stood the wooden settle where the children sat before bed-time to watch the fire or glance up through the wide chimney at the stars.

Here, when three years old, Bryant often stood book in hand and with painful attention to gesture repeated one of Watts's hymns, while his mother listened and corrected. Here he pre-

pared his lessons, and wrote those first childish poems so carefully criticised by his father, who was his teacher in the art of composition. In the poem called *A Lifetime* Bryant long afterward described many incidents of his childhood and the influence of his father and mother upon his art, one developing his talent for composition, and the other directing his imagination to and enlisting his sympathies with humanity. This poem shows the boy by his mother's knee, reading the story of Pharaoh and the Israelites, of David and Goliath, and of the life of Christ. As he grew older Bryant shared the usual amusements of country life. In the spring he took his turn in the maple-sugar camp; in the autumn he attended the huskings when the young people met to husk the corn in each neighborhood barn successively, until all was done. He helped at the cider-making bees, and the apple parings, when the cider and apple sauce were prepared for the year's need; and at the house raisings, when men and boys raised the frame of a neighbor's house or barn. In those times the farmers depended upon each other for

such friendly aid, and the community seemed like one great family.

On Sunday every one went three times to meeting, listened to long sermons, and sang out of the old Bay Psalm Book. If any unlucky child fell asleep he was speedily waked up by the tithingman, who would tickle his nose with a hare's-foot attached to a long pole. Once in a while a boy might be restless or noisy, and then he was led out of the meeting-house and punished with the tithingman's rod, a terrible disgrace.

Throughout his childhood Bryant wrote verses upon every subject discussed in the family, and in those days New England families discussed all the great events of the time. The listening children became public-spirited and patriotic without knowing it. At thirteen Bryant wrote a most scathing satire upon the policy of Thomas Jefferson, intended to make the President hang his head in shame. It was quoted in all the newspapers opposed to Jefferson, and a second edition of this pamphlet was called for in a few months. Bryant here prophesies the evils in store for the

country if the President insisted on the embargo that was then laid upon American vessels, and advises him to retire to the bogs of Louisiana and search for horned frogs; advice which Jefferson did not feel called upon to follow. It was Bryant's first introduction to the reading public, but it was not that path in literature that he was destined to follow. Only one or two of his earliest verses give any hint of the poet of nature, though it was during this time that he absorbed those influences that directed his whole life. It is from the retrospective poem, *Green River*, that we really know the boy Bryant to whom the charm of sky and wood and singing brook was so unconscious that it seemed a part of life itself. In *Green River*, written after he became a man, we hear the echoes of his young days, and we know that the boy's soul had already entered into a close communion with nature.

But Bryant had not yet reached manhood when the true voice of his heart was heard in the most celebrated poem that he ever wrote, and one of the most remarkable ever written by a

youth. This was *Thanatopsis*, which his father discovered among his papers and sent to the *North American Review* without his son's knowledge, so little did the poet of eighteen, who five years before had published the tirade against Jefferson, realize that he had produced the most remarkable verses yet written in America.

Thanatopsis attracted instant attention in this country and in England. It had appeared anonymously, and American critics insisted that it could not be the work of an American author as no native poet approached it either in sublimity of thought or perfection of style. But *Thanatopsis* bears no trace of English influence, nor was it strange that an heir of the Puritan spirit, who had lived in daily communion with nature, should thus set to the music of poetry the hopes and inspirations of his race.

Thanatopsis is the first great American poem, and it divides by a sharp line the poetry hitherto written on our soil from that which was to follow. Henceforth the poets of the newer England ceased to find their greatest inspiration

in the older land. At the time of the publication of the poem Bryant was studying law in Great Barrington, Mass., having been obliged by poverty to leave college after a two years' course. It was in the brief interval before beginning his office studies that he wrote *Thanatopsis* putting it aside for future revision.

He was already hard at work upon his profession when his sudden literary success changed all his plans. Destined by nature to be a man of letters, he poured forth verse and prose during the whole time he was studying and practising law. Six months after the publication of *Thanatopsis* the poem entitled *To a Waterfowl*, suggested by the devious flight of a wild duck across the sunset sky, appeared.

It is a perfect picture of the reedy river banks, the wet marshes, and the lonely lakes over which the bird hovered, and it is full of the charm of nature herself. From this time on Bryant's touch never faltered. He was the chosen poet of the wild beauty of his native hills and valleys, and his own pure spirit revealed the most sacred meanings of this beauty.

In 1821 he published his first volume of poems under the title, *Poems by William Cullen Bryant.* It was a little book of forty pages, containing *Thanatopsis*, *Green River*, *To a Waterfowl*, and other pieces, among which was the charming, *The Yellow Violet*, a very breath of the spring. This little book was given to the world in the same year in which Cooper published *The Spy* and Irving completed *The Sketch Book.*

In 1825 Bryant removed to New York to assume the editorship of a monthly review, to which he gave many of his best-known poems. A year later he joined the staff of the *Evening Post*, with which he was connected until his death.

From this time his life was that of a literary man. He made of the *Evening Post* a progressive, public-spirited newspaper, whose field embraced every phase of American life. When he became its editor five days were required for the reports of the Legislature at Albany to reach New York, these being carried by mail coach. The extracts printed from English newspapers

were a month old, and even this was considered enterprising journalism. All the despatches from different cities of the United States bore dates a fortnight old, while it was often impossible to obtain news at all. The paper contained advertisements of the stage lines to Boston, Philadelphia, and the West; accounts of projects to explore the centre of the earth by means of sunken wells; reports of the possibility of a railroad being built in the United States; advertisements of lottery tickets; a list of the unclaimed letters at the post-office, and usually a chapter of fiction. Such was the newspaper of 1831.

During the fifty-two years of his editorship the United States were developed from a few struggling colonies bound together by common interests into one of the greatest of modern nations. And through all the changes incident to this career Bryant stood always firm to the principles which he recognized as the true foundations of a country's greatness.

When he was born the United States consisted of a strip of land lying between the

Atlantic and the Alleghany Mountains, of which more than half was unbroken wilderness. At his death the Republic extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Gulf to Canada. His life-time corresponded with the growth of his country, and his own work was a noble contribution to the nation's prosperity. In all times of national trouble the *Evening Post* championed the cause of justice, and Bryant was everywhere respected as a man devoted above all to the "cause of America and of human nature."

The conduct of the *Evening Post* did not, however, interfere with his work as a poet, and in 1832 he published in one volume all the poems which he had written, most of which had previously appeared in magazines. A few months later an edition appeared in London with an introduction by Irving. It was this volume which gave Bryant an English reputation as great as that he enjoyed in America. Like Cooper, he revealed an unfamiliar nature as seen in American forests, hills, and streams, taking his readers with him into those solitary and quiet places where dwelt the wild birds and

wild flowers. The very titles of his poems show how closely he lived to the life of the world around him. *The Walk at Sunset*, *The West Wind*, *The Forest Hymn*, *Autumn Woods*, *The Death of the Flowers*, *The Fringed Gentian*, *The Wind and Stream*, *The Little People of the Snow*, and many others disclose how Bryant gathered from every source the beauty which he translated into his verses.

Among the poems which touch upon the Indian traditions are *The Indian Girl's Lament*, *Monument Mountain*, and *An Indian at the Burial-place of his Father*. In these he lingers upon the pathetic fate of the red man driven from the home of his race and forced into exile by the usurping whites. They are full of sadness, seeming to wake once again the memories of other times when the forest was alive with the night-fires of savage man and the days brought only the gladness of freedom.

Besides his original work Bryant performed a noble task in the translation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer. He was over seventy when he began this work, and was five years in com-

pleting it. The poems are put into blank verse, of which Bryant was a master, and they have caught the very spirit of the old Greek bard; so faithfully did the modern poet understand that shadowy past that he might have watched with Helen the burning of Troy, or journeyed with Ulysses throughout his wanderings in the perilous seas.

The light of Bryant's imagination burned steadily to the end. In his eighty-second year he wrote his last important poem, *The Flood of Years*. It is a beautiful confession of faith in the nobility of life and the immortality of the soul, and a fitting crown for an existence so beneficent and exalted.

His last public work was to participate in unveiling a monument to the Italian statesman Mazzini in Central Park, when he was the orator of the day. On the same evening he was seized with his last illness. He died on June 12, 1878, and was buried at Roslyn, Long Island, one of his favorite country homes.

CHAPTER VI

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT

1796–1859

One of the stories that mankind has always liked to believe is that of the existence of a marvellous country whose climate was perfect, whose people were happy, whose king was wise and good, and where wealth abounded. The old travellers of the Middle Ages dreamed of finding this land somewhere in the far East. Many books were written about it, and many tales told by knight and palmer of its rivers of gold, mines of precious stones, and treasure vaults of inexhaustible riches. But, although from time to time some famous traveller like Marco Polo or Sir John Mandeville described the great wealth of Ormus or Cathay, yet no one ever found the real country of his imagination, and the dream passed down from generation to generation un-

fulfilled. The Spaniards called this country *El Dorado*, and perhaps their vision of it was the wildest of all, for not only were they to find inexhaustible riches, but trees whose fruit would heal disease, magic wells which yielded happiness, and fountains of immortal youth. Thus dreamed the Spaniard of the fifteenth century, and when Columbus found the new world it was believed that it included El Dorado. Leader after leader mustered his knights and soldiers and sought the golden country. They traversed forests, climbed mountains, forded rivers, and waded through swamps and morasses; they suffered hunger, thirst, and fever, and the savage hostility of the Indians; they died by hundreds and were buried in unmarked graves, and expedition after expedition returned to Spain to report the fruitlessness of their search. But the hope was not given up. New seekers started on the quest, and it seemed that the ships of Spain could hardly hold her eager adventurers.

In a strange way this dream of El Dorado was realized. Two soldiers of fortune, bolder, hardier, luckier than the rest, actually found not

one country but two, which were in part at least like the golden world they sought. High upon the table-land of Mexico and guarded by its snow-capped mountains they found the kingdom of the Aztecs, with their vast wealth of gold and silver. Safe behind the barrier of the Andes lay the land of the Incas, whose riches were, like those of Ophir or Cathay, not to be measured. Both of these countries possessed a strange and characteristic civilization. In fact, even to this day, scholars are puzzled to know the source of the knowledge which these people possessed.

In Mexico Hernando Cortez found a government whose head was the king, supported by a tribunal of judges who governed the principal cities. If a judge took a bribe he was put to death. In the king's tribunal the throne was of gold inlaid with turquoises. The walls were hung with tapestry embroidered with figures of birds and flowers. Over the throne was a canopy flashing with gold and jewels. There were officers to escort prisoners to and from court, and an account of the proceedings was kept in hieroglyphic paintings. All the laws of the

kingdom were taught by these paintings to the people. The Aztecs had orders of nobility and knighthood; they had a military code and hospitals for the sick. Their temples glittered with gold and jewels, and they had ceremonies of baptism, marriage, and burial. They had monastic orders, astrologists and astronomers, physicians, merchants, jewellers, mechanics, and husbandmen. Their palaces were treasure-houses of wealth. In fact, they were as unlike the Indians of the eastern coast of America as the Englishman of to-day is unlike the half-naked savage who in the early ages roamed through England, subsisting upon berries and raw flesh.

In Peru Francisco Pizarro found a great and powerful empire, ruled over by a wise sovereign. In the whole length and breadth of the land not one poor or sick person was left uncared for by the state. Great highways traversed mountain passes and crossed ravines and precipices to the most distant parts of the kingdom. Huge aqueducts of stone carried the mountain streams for hundreds of miles to the plains below. Massive fortresses, whose masonry was so solid that

it seemed part of the mountain itself, linked the cities together, and a postal system extended over the empire composed of relays of couriers who wore a peculiar livery and ran from one post to another at the rate of one hundred and fifty miles a day. The walls of temples and palaces were covered with plates of gold encrusted with precious stones. The raiment of the king and nobles was embroidered with jewels. The lakes in the royal court-yards were fringed with wild flowers brought from every corner of the empire and representing every degree of climate. In a word, it was the dream of El Dorado fulfilled.

Although these two countries were alike peopled by races who had lived there since remote antiquity, neither had ever heard of the existence of the other, and thus we have the picture of two civilizations, very similar, springing up independently.

The conquest of Mexico by Cortez in 1521 changed the entire life of the people. Their forts and cities were ruined; three of their kings had fallen during the struggle; the whole country had been divided among the conquerors, and the

Aztecs were made slaves. Cortez rebuilt the City of Mexico and filled the country with cathedrals and convents. He tried to convert the natives to Christianity, and Mexico became Spanish in its laws and institutions.

But the old civilization had passed away; there was no more an Aztec nation; and though in time the Indians and Spaniards formed together a new race, it did not partake of the spirit of the old.

What Cortez did for Mexico, Pizarro accomplished twelve years later in Peru. On the death of their monarch, the Inca, the Peruvians lost spirit and were more easily conquered than the Aztecs. Peru became a Spanish province, and, like Mexico, was considered by the crown only as a treasure-house from which to draw endless wealth. No regret was felt for the two great and powerful nations that had ceased to exist.

In the meantime the settlement of America went on rapidly. Florida, the valley of the Mississippi, Canada, and New England became powerful colonies forming the nucleus of new countries, which had never heard of the civiliza-

tions of Mexico and Peru, and whose only knowledge of Indians was gathered from the savage tribes from which they had wrested the soil. In 1610 the Spanish historian Solis wrote an account of the subjugation of Mexico, in which the conquerors were portrayed in glowing colors. This work was read chiefly by scholars. In 1779 the English historian Robertson gave in his *History of the New World* a brilliant sketch of the Spanish conquests in America. But not until 1847 was the world offered the detailed narrative of the conquest and ruin of the Aztec empire.

This work was from the pen of the American scholar, William H. Prescott, who was already known as the author of a history of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, a work which had brought him a European reputation.

Prescott was born in Salem, Mass., in 1796, in an old elm-shaded house. From his earliest years he was a teller of stories, and had a high reputation among his boy friends as a romancer. Walking to and from school with his companions he invented tale after tale, sometimes the

narrative being continued from day to day, lessons and home duties being considered but tiresome interruptions to the real business of life. Very often one of these stories begun on Monday would be continued through the whole week, and the end be celebrated on Saturday by a visit to the Boston Athenæum, into whose recesses he would beguile his fellows, while they buckled on the old armor found there, and played at joust and tournament, imagining themselves to be Lancelot, Ronsard, or Bayard, as the case might be.

A life of Gibbon which Prescott read in his teens led to an enthusiastic study of history and to the resolve to become if possible a historian himself. While a student at Harvard one of his eyes was so injured by the carelessness of a fellow pupil that he lost the entire use of it; but he kept to the resolution to fulfil the task he had set for himself. His fame began with the publication of the *History of Ferdinand and Isabella*, which was published almost simultaneously in Germany, France, Spain, Italy, and Russia. It covers the history of Spain from the Moorish

invasion through the period of national glory which illumined the reign of Isabella. The civil wars, the Jewish persecutions, the discovery of the New World, the expulsion of the Moors, the Italian wars, and the social life of the people, their arts and pursuits, their amusements, and the literature of that age, are vividly presented.

The recognition of his merits was welcome to Prescott. While doubting which subject to choose for his labors he had heard several lectures upon Spanish literature, prepared for delivery at Harvard College, and at once applied himself to the study of the Spanish language, history, and romance as a preparation for his life work, and two years after began his celebrated work. The book was eleven years in preparation, and is full of enthusiasm for the romance and chivalry of the Old World. Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico* began with a sketch of the ancient Aztec civilization, proceeded to a description of the conquest by Cortez, and concluded with an account of the after career of the great commander, the whole

work seeming a brilliant romance rather than sober history.

The materials for Prescott's work were gathered from every known available source. The narratives of eye-witnesses were brought forth from their hiding-places in the royal libraries of Spain, and patiently transcribed ; old letters, unpublished chronicles, royal edicts, monkish legends, every scrap of information attainable, was transmitted to the worker across the sea, who because of his partial blindness had to depend entirely upon others in the collection of his authorities. These documents were read to Prescott by a secretary, who took notes under the author's direction ; these notes were again read to him, and then after sifting, comparing and, retracing again and again the old ground, the historian began his work. He wrote upon a noctograph with an ivory stylus, as a blind man writes, and because of great physical weakness he was able to accomplish only a very little each day. But week by week the work grew. His marvellous memory enabled him to recall sixty pages of printed matter at once. His wonderful

imagination enabled him to present the Mexico of the sixteenth century as it appeared to the old Spanish cavaliers, and as no historian had ever presented it before. He made of each episode of the great drama a finished and perfect picture. In fact, the *History of the Conquest of Mexico* is more than anything else a historical painting wrought to perfection by the cunning of the master hand.

Prescott spent six years over this work, which enhanced his fame as a historian and kept for American literature the high place won by Irving. Indeed, Irving himself had designed to write the history of the conquest of Mexico, but withdrew in favor of Prescott.

Three months after the publication of his work on Mexico, Prescott began the *History of the Conquest of Peru*, the materials for which had already been obtained. But these documents proved much more complete than those describing the Mexican conquest.

The conquest of Mexico was achieved mainly by one man, Cortez; but while Pizarro was virtually the head of the expedition against Peru,

he was accompanied by others whose plans were often opposed to his own, and whose personal devotion could never be counted upon. Each of these men held regular correspondence with the court of Spain, and Pizarro never knew when his own account of the capture of a city or settlement of a colony would be contradicted by the statement of one of his officers. After the capture and death of the Inca, which was the real conquest of the country from the natives, Pizarro was obliged to reconquer Peru from his own officers, who quarrelled with him and among themselves continually.

The conquest is shown to be a war of adventurers, a crusade of buccaneers, who wanted only gold. The sieges and battles of the Spaniards read like massacres, and the story of the death of the Inca like an unbelievable horror of the Dark Ages. This scene, contrasted with the glowing description of the former magnificence of the Inca, shows Prescott in his most brilliant mood as a writer. Perhaps his greatest gift is this power of reproducing faithfully the actual spirit of the conquest, a spirit which,

in spite of the glitter of arms and splendor of religious ceremonial, proves to have been one of greed and lowest selfishness.

The Conquest of Peru, published in 1847, when Prescott was fifty-two years old, was the last of his historical works. These three histories, with three volumes of an uncompleted life of Philip II., which promised to be his greatest work, and a volume of essays comprise Prescott's contribution to American literature, and begin that series of brilliant historical works of which American letters boast.

Prescott, during the most of his literary life, was obliged to sit quietly in his study, leaving to other hands the collection of the materials for his work. For, besides the accident which during his college life deprived him of one eye, he was always delicate. Sometimes he would be kept for months in a darkened room, and at best his life was one of seclusion. The strife of the world and of action was not for him. In his library, surrounded by his books and assisted by his secretary, he sought for truth as the old alchemists sought for gold. Patient and tireless

he unravelled thread after thread of the fabric from which he was to weave the history of the Spanish conquests.

If Prescott had had access to documents which have since come to light, if he had been able to visit the places he described, and to study their unwritten records, his work would have been a splendid and imperishable monument to the dead civilization of the Aztec and Peruvian.

As it is, it must serve as a guiding light pointing to the right way, one which shed lustre on the new literature of his country and opened an unexplored region to the American writer.

CHAPTER VII

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

1807–1892

In an old New England farm-house kitchen, a barefoot boy, dressed in homespun, one day sat listening to a lazy Scotch beggar who piped the songs of Burns in return for his meal of bread and cheese and cider. The beggar was good-natured, and the boy was an eager listener, and *Bonnie Doon*, *Highland Mary*, and *Auld Lang Syne* were trilled forth as the master himself may have sung them among the Scottish "banks and braes." Never before had the farmer boy heard of the famous peasant, and a new door was opened through which he passed into an undreamed of world. A few months later the school-master gave him a copy of Burns's poems, and with this gift the boy became a poet himself. For these songs of roadsides

and meadows, of ploughed fields and wet hedge-rows, were to him familiar pictures of every-day life, whose poetry, once revealed, had to express itself in words.

The boy was the son of John and Abigail Whittier, Quaker farmers owning a little homestead in the valley of the Merrimac, near the town of Haverhill, Mass. In honor of an ancestor he had been named John Greenleaf Whittier, the Greenleaf, as he tells us in one of his poems, having become Americanized from the French *feuille verte*, *green leaf*, a suggestion, perhaps, of far away days in which the family might have been men of the wood, keepers of the deer or forest guarders in France during feudal ages. In his boyhood, life in the Merrimac valley was primitive enough. The house was small and plain, the kitchen being the living room, and the parlor dedicated to Sunday and holiday use only. The floor was sanded and on the wide fire-place benches the men and children of the family sat at night to whittle axe-handles, mend shoes, crack nuts, or learn the next day's lessons. Often a stranger was found

among them; some Quaker travelling on business, or a stranger on his way to some distant town, or perhaps a professional beggar to whom the hospitality of the place was well known. Once when the mother had refused a night's shelter to an unprepossessing vagabond, John was sent out to bring him back. He proved to be an Italian artisan, and after supper he told them of the Italian grape gatherings and festivals, and of the wonderful beauty of Italy, paying for his entertainment by presenting to the mother a recipe for making bread from chestnuts.

Sometimes the visitor would be an uncanny old crone who still believed in witches and fairies, and who told how her butter refused to come, or how her candle had been snuffed out by a witch in the form of a big black bug. One old woman in the neighborhood was renowned for her tales of ghosts, devils, fairies, brownies, sprenties, enchanted towers, headless men, haunted mills that were run at night by ghostly millers and witches riding on broom-sticks by the light of the full moon, and descending un-

guarded chimneys to lay their spells upon cream-pot and yeast-bowl.

After such an evening's entertainment the boy needed courage to leave the bright kitchen fire and climb up the narrow stairs to the loft where he slept, and where the sound of the night-wind crept through the frosty rafters, and the voice of the screech-owl came dismally from the trees outside.

Haverhill boasted at that time its village conjurer, who could remove the spells of those wicked spirits, and whose gaunt form could be seen any day along the meadows and streams gathering herbs to be stewed and brewed into love-potions, cures for melancholy, spells against witchcraft, and other remedies for human ills. He was held in great respect by the inhabitants, and feared almost as much as the witches themselves.

An ever-welcome guest at the Whittiers was the school-master, whose head was full of the local legends, and whose tales of Indian raids and of revolutionary struggles were regarded as authentic history. This Yankee pedagogue,

5359

moreover, could, with infinite spirit and zest, retell the classic stories of the Greek and Latin poets.

Twice a year came to the little homestead the Yankee pedler, with his supply of pins, needles, thread, razors, soaps, and scissors for the elders, and jack-knives for the boys who had been saving their pennies to purchase those treasures. He had gay ribbons for worldly minded maids, but these were never bought for Quaker Whittier's daughters. But to Poet John's thinking the pedler's choicest wares were the songs of his own composing, printed with wood-cuts, which he sold at an astonishingly low price, or even, upon occasions, gave away. These songs celebrated earthquakes, fires, shipwrecks, hangings, marriages, deaths, and funerals. Often they were improvised as the pedler sat with the rest around the hearth fire. If a wedding had occurred during his absence he was ready to versify it, and equally ready to lament the loss of a favorite cow. To Whittier this gift of rhyming seemed marvellous, and in after years he described this wandering minstrel as encircled, to

his young eyes, with the very nimbus of immortality.

Such was the home-life of this barefooted boy, who drove the cows night and morning through the dewy meadows, and followed the oxen, breaking the earth into rich brown furrows, whose sight and smell suggested to him always the generous bounty of nature. From early spring, when the corn was planted in fields bordered by wild rose-bushes, to late autumn, when the crop lay bound into glistening sheaves, his life was one of steady toil, lightened sometimes by a day's fishing in the mountain streams or by a berrying excursion up among the hills.

In cold weather he went to school in the little school-house that he celebrates in one of his poems, and very often, as he confessed, he was found writing verses instead of doing sums on his slate.

This old phase of New-England life has now passed away, but he has preserved its memory in three poems, which are in a special sense biographical. These poems are, *The Barefoot Boy*, *My Schoolmaster*, and *Snow-Bound*. The first

two are simple, boyish memories, but the last is a description not only of his early home, but of the New-England farm life, and is a Puritan idyl.

All are full of the idealization of childhood, for the poet could never break loose from the charm which had enthralled him as a boy. The poetry of common life which lay over the meadow lands and fields of grain, which gave a voice to the woodland brook, and glorified the falling rain and snow, was felt by Whittier, when, as a child, he paused from his work to listen to the robin's song among the wheat or watch the flocks of clouds making their way across the summer sky.

When he was nineteen years of age the country-side mail-carrier one day rode up to the farm and took from his saddle-bags the weekly paper, which he tossed to the boy, who stood mending a fence. With trembling eagerness Whittier opened it, and saw in the "Poet's Corner" his first printed poem. He had sent it with little hope that it would be accepted, and the sight of it filled him with joy, and determined his literary career. A few months later the editor of the

paper, William Lloyd Garrison, drove out to the homestead to see the young verse-maker. Whittier was called from the field where he was hoeing, and in the interview that followed Garrison insisted that such talent should not be thrown away, and urged the youth to take a course of study at some academy. But, although the farm supplied the daily needs of the family, money was scarce, and the sum required for board and tuition was impossible to scrape together. A young farm assistant, however, offered to teach Whittier the trade of shoemaking, and his every moment of leisure was thereafter spent in learning this craft. During the following winter the lad furnished the women of the neighborhood with good, well-made shoes, and with the money thus earned he entered Haverhill Academy in April, 1827, being then in his twentieth year. For the next six months his favorite haunts in field and wood were unvisited, except on the Saturdays and Sundays spent with his family. He gained some reputation as a poet by the publication of the ode which he wrote in honor of the new academy, and although he

returned to the farm after six months of study, it was only to earn more money for further schooling.

His poems and sketches now began to appear in the different newspapers and periodicals, and he did some editing for various papers. This work brought him into notice among literary people, but it was his political convictions that first gave him a national reputation.

From the first Whittier stood side by side with William Lloyd Garrison in his crusade against slavery, and many of his best poems appeared in the *Liberator*, Garrison's own paper. These poems, with others, were collected in a volume called *Voices of Freedom.* It was these songs, which rushed onward like his own mountain brooks, that made Whittier known from one end of the country to the other as an apostle of liberty. All Whittier's poems of this period belong to the political history of the country, of which they are as much a part as the war records.

In all this work there is no trace of bitterness or enmity. His songs of freedom were but the bugle-notes calling the nation to a higher human-

ity. Like the old Hebrew prophets, he spared not his own, and many of his most burning words are a summons to duty to his brothers in the North. If he could remind the South that the breath of slavery tainted the air

"That old Dekalb and Sumter drank,"

he could also, in *Barbara Frietchie*, pay loving tribute to the noble heart of one of her best-loved sons. His was the dream of the great nation to be—his spirit that of the preacher who saw his people unfaithful to the high trust they had received as guardians of the land which the world had been taught to regard as the home of liberty. It was this high conception that gave to his work its greatest power, and that made Whittier, above all others, the poet of freedom; so that although the mission of these poems has ceased, and as literature they will not appeal to succeeding generations as forcibly as they did to their own, as a part of national history they will be long preserved.

Whittier's other poems deal so largely with the home-life of his day that he is called the poet of

New England. All its traditions, memories, and beliefs are faithfully recorded by him. In *Snow-Bound* we have the life of the New-England farmer. In *Mabel Martin* we see again the old Puritan dogmatism hunting down witches, burning or hanging them, and following with relentless persecution the families of the unhappy wretches who thus came under the ban. In *Mogg Megone* is celebrated in beautiful verse one of those legends of Indian life which linger immortally around the pines of New England, while the *Grave by the Lake*, the *Changeling*, the *Wreck of Rivermouth*, the *Dead Ship of Harpswell*, and others in the collection called the *Tent on the Beach*, revive old traditions of those early days when history mingled with legend and the belief in water-spirits and ghostly warnings had not yet vanished.

In some exquisite ballads, such as *School Days*, we have the memory of the past, fresh as the wild violets which the poet culled as a boy, while *Maud Muller* is a very idyl of a New-England harvest-field in the poet's youth. In *Among the Hills* we have some of Whittier's best poems of

country life, while many minor poems celebrate the hills and streams of which he was so fond. Whittier wrote, also, many beautiful hymns, and his poems for children, such as *King Solomon and the Ants* and *The Robin*, show how easy it was for his great heart to enter into the spirit of childhood. *Child Life*, his compilation of poems for childhood, is one of the best ever made, while another compilation, called *Songs of Three Centuries*, shows his wide familiarity and appreciation of all that is great in English poetry.

After the sale of the old home of his childhood Whittier lived in the house at Amesbury, which for many years his sister shared. His last collection of poems, called *Sundown*, was published in 1890, for some friends only, as a memento of his eightieth birthday. He died two years later, and was buried in the yard of the Friends' meeting-house in Amesbury, a short distance from his birthplace.

CHAPTER VIII

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

1804–1864

In 1804 the town of Salem, in Massachusetts, was the most important seaport in America. With the regularity of the tides its ships sailed to China, the East Indies, the Feejee Islands, South America, and the West Indies, and its seamen were as well known in the harbors of these distant places as in their native town. Throughout the Revolution Salem, with some neighboring smaller ports, was the hope of the colonists. No American navy existed; but the merchants and marines turned their vessels into ships of war, and under the name of privateers swept the seas of British cruisers, capturing in six years over four hundred and fifty prizes. During the war of 1812, again, the naval service was led by the hardy Salem captains, and the brave little

seaport gave generously to the cause of the nation. Salem from the first was identified with American independence. Upon her hillsides one memorable day the inhabitants gathered to watch the fight between the Chesapeake and the Shannon, and through her streets, a few weeks later, the body of the heroic Lawrence was borne in state. Among the thronging crowds that day must have wandered the boy Nathaniel Hawthorne, then in his tenth year. Born in Salem, he came of a line of seafaring men who had fought their way to fame and fortune in the teeth of wind and wave ; his family having its American beginning at the time when Indian and white man alike made their homes in the shadowy aisles of the New-England forests. These ocean-roving ancestors were among the first to take an American ship to St. Petersburg, Sumatra, Australia, and Africa. They fought pirates, overcame savages, suffered shipwreck and disaster, and many of them found their graves in the waters of some foreign sea. Hawthorne's own father was lost on a voyage.

From this race of hardy sailors Hawthorne

inherited the patience, courage, and endurance which were the basis of his character, a character touched besides by that melancholy and love of solitude which is apt to distinguish those born by the sea. It is this combination, perhaps, of Puritan steadfastness of purpose and wild adventurous life that descended to Hawthorne in the form of the most exquisite imagination tinctured with the highest moral aspirations. It was the sturdy, healthy plant of Puritanism blossoming into a beautiful flower.

In this old town of Salem, with its quaint houses, with their carved doorways and many windows, with its pretty rose-gardens, its beautiful overshadowing elms, its dingy court-house and celebrated town-pump, Hawthorne passed his early life, his picturesque surroundings forming a suitable environment for the handsome, imaginative boy who was to create the most beautiful literary art that America had yet known. Behind the town stood old Witch Hill, grim and ghastly with memories of the witches hanged there in colonial times. In front spread the sea, a golden argosy of promise, whose wharves and

warehouses held priceless stores of merchandise. Between this haunting spirit of the past and the broader, newer life of the future, Hawthorne walked with the serene hope of the youth of that day. The old, intolerant Puritanism had passed away. Only the fine gold remained as the priceless treasure of the new generation.

Hawthorne's boyhood was much like that of any other boy in Salem town. He went to school and to church, loved the sea and prophesied that he should go away on it some day and never return, was fond of reading, and ready to fight with any school-fellows who had, as he expressed it, "a quarrelsome disposition." He was a healthy, robust lad, finding life a good thing whether he was roaming the streets, sitting idly on the wharves, or stretched on the floor at home reading a favorite author.

Almost all boys who have become writers have liked the same books, and Hawthorne, like his fellows, lived in the magic world of Shakespeare and Milton, Spenser, Froissart, and Bunyan. *The Pilgrim's Progress* was an especial favorite with him, its lofty spirit carry-

ing his soul into those spiritual regions which the child mind reverences without understanding. For one year of his boyhood he was supremely happy in the wild regions of Sebago Lake, Me., where the family lived for a time. Here, he says, he led the life of a bird of the air, with no restraint and in absolute freedom. In the summer he would take his gun and spend days in the forest, doing whatever pleased his vagabond spirit at the moment. In the winter he would follow the hunters through the snow, or skate till midnight alone upon the frozen lake with only the shadows of the hills to keep him company, and sometimes pass the remainder of the night in a solitary log cabin, warmed by the blaze of the fallen evergreens.

But he had to return to Salem to prepare for college, whither he went in 1821, in his seventeenth year. He entered Bowdoin, and had among his fellow-students Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Franklin Pierce, afterward President of the United States. Here Hawthorne spent happy days, and long afterward, in writing to an old college friend, he speaks of

the charm that lingers around the memory of the place when he gathered blueberries in study hours, watched the great logs drifting down the current of the Androscoggin from the lumber districts above, fished in the forest streams, and shot pigeons and squirrels in hours which should have been devoted to the classics.

In this same letter, which forms the dedication to one of his books, he adds that it is this friend, if any one, who is responsible for his becoming a writer, as it was here, in the shadow of the tall pines which sheltered Bowdoin College, that the first prophecy concerning his destiny was made. He was to be a writer of fiction, the friend said, little dreaming of the honors that were to crown one of the great novelists of the world.

After leaving Bowdoin Hawthorne returned to Salem, where he passed the next twelve years of his life. Here he produced, from time to time, stories and sketches which found their way to the periodicals and won for him a narrow reputation. But the years which a man usually devotes to his best work were spent by Hawthorne in a contented half-dream of a

great future, for good as is some of the work produced at this time, it never would have won for the author the highest place in American literature. These stories and sketches were afterward collected and published under the title *Twice-Told Tales* and *The Snow Image.* Full of the grace and beauty of Hawthorne's style, they were the best imaginative work yet produced in America, but in speaking of them Hawthorne himself says that in this result of twelve years there is little to show for its thought and industry.

But the promise of his genius was fulfilled at last. In 1850, when Hawthorne was forty-six years old, appeared his first great romance. Hawthorne had chosen for his subject a picture of Puritan times in New England, and out of the tarnished records of the past he created a work of art of marvellous and imperishable beauty. In the days of which he wrote, a Puritan town was exactly like a large family bound together by mutual interests, the acts of each life being regarded as affecting the whole community. Hawthorne has preserved this spirit of colonial

New England, with all its struggles, hopes, and fears, and the conscience-driven Puritan, who lived in the new generation only in public records and church histories, was given new life. In Hawthorne's day this grim figure, stalking in the midst of Indian fights, village pillories, town-meetings, witch-burnings, and church-councils was already a memory. With his steeple-crowned hat and his matchlock at his side he had left the pleasant New-England farm lands and was found only in the court-houses, where his deeds were recorded. Hawthorne brought him back from the past, set him in the midst of his fellow-elders in the church, and showed him a sufferer for conscience' sake.

This first romance, published under the title *The Scarlet Letter*, revealed to Hawthorne himself, as well as to the world outside, the transcendent power of his genius. Hawthorne, who was despondent of the little popularity of his other books, told the publisher who saw the first sketch of *The Scarlet Letter*, that he did not know whether the story was very good or very bad. The publisher, however, at once perceived

its worth and brought it out one year from that time, and the public saw that it had been entertaining a genius unawares. Hawthorne's next book, *The House of the Seven Gables*, is a story of the New England of his own day. A clever critic has called it an impression of a summer afternoon in an elm-shadowed New-England town. Through its pages flit quaint contrasting figures that one might find in New England and nowhere else. The old spinster of ancient family, obliged to open a toy and gingerbread shop, but never forgetting the time when the house with seven gables was a mansion of limitless hospitality, is a pathetic picture of disappointed hope and broken-down fortune. So is her brother, who was falsely imprisoned for twenty years, and who in his old age must lean upon his sister for support; and the other characters are equally true to the life that has almost disappeared in the changes of the half-century since its scenes were made the inspiration of Hawthorne's romance.

The House of the Seven Gables was followed by two beautiful volumes for children, *The Won-*

der Book and *Tanglewood Tales.* In *The Wonder Book* Hawthorne writes as if he were a child himself, so simple is the charm that he weaves around these old, old tales. Not content with the Greek myths, he created little incidents and impossible characters that glance in and out with elfin grace. One feels that these were the very stories that were told by the centaurs, fauns, and satyrs themselves in the shadows of the old Attic forests. Here we learn that King Midas not only had his palace turned to gold, but that his own little daughter, Marigold, a fancy of Hawthorne's own, was also converted into the same shining metal. We learn, too, the secrets of many a hero and god of this realm of fancy which had been unsuspected by any other historian of their deeds. Every child who reads *The Wonder Book* doubts not that Hawthorne had hobnobbed many a moonlit night with Pan and Bacchus in their vine-covered grottos by the riverside. This dainty, ethereal touch appears in all his work for children.

A like quality gives distinction to his fourth great novel, which deals with a man supposed to

be a descendant of the old fauns. This creation, named Donatello, from his resemblance to the celebrated statue of the Marble Faun, is not wholly human, although he has human interests and feeling. Hawthorne makes Donatello ashamed of his pointed ears, though his spirit is as wild and untamed as that of his rude ancestors. In this book there is a description of a scene where Count Donatello joins in a peasant dance around a public fountain. And so vividly is his half-human nature here brought out that Hawthorne seems to have witnessed somewhere the mad revels of the veritable fauns and satyrs in the days of their life upon the earth. Throughout this story Hawthorne shows the same subtle sympathy with uncommon natures, the mystery of such souls having the same fascination for him that the secrets of the earth and air have for the scientist and philosopher.

The book coming between *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Marble Faun* is called *The Blithedale Romance.* It is in part the record of a period of Hawthorne's life when

he joined a community which hoped to improve the world by combining healthy manual labor with intellectual pursuits, and proving that self-interest and all differences in rank must be hurtful to the commonwealth. This little society lived in a suburb of Boston, and called their association Brook Farm. Each member performed daily some manual labor on the farm or in the house, hours being set aside for study. Here Hawthorne ploughed the fields and joined in the amusements, or sat apart while the rest talked about art and literature, danced, sang, or read Shakespeare aloud. Some of the cleverest men and women of New England joined this community, the rules of which obliged the men to wear plaid blouses and rough straw hats, and the women to content themselves with plain calico gowns.

These serious-minded men and women, who tried to solve a great problem by leading the lives of Arcadian shepherds, at length dispersed, each one going back to the world and working on as bravely as if the experiment had been a great success. The experiences of Brook Farm

were shadowed forth in *The Blithedale Romance*, although it was not a literal narrative.

Immediately after this Hawthorne was married and went to live in Concord, near Boston, in a quaint old dwelling called The Manse. And as all his work partakes of the personal flavor of his own life, so his existence here is recorded in a delightful series of essays called *Mosses from an Old Manse*. Here we have a description of the old house itself, and of the author's family life, of the kitchen-garden and apple-orchards, of the meadows and woods, and of his friendship with that lover of nature, Henry Thoreau, whose writings form a valuable contribution to American literature. The *Mosses from an Old Manse* must ever be famous as the history of the quiet hours of one of the greatest American men of letters. They are full of Hawthorne's own personality, and reveal more than any other of his books the depth and purity of his poetic and rarely gifted nature.

In 1853 his old friend and schoolmate, President Pierce, appointed Hawthorne American Consul at Liverpool. He remained abroad

seven years, spending the last four on the Continent, some transcriptions of his experience being found in the celebrated *Marble Faun* and in several volumes of *Note-Books*. *The Marble Faun*, published in Europe under the title *Transformation*, was written in Rome, and was partly suggested to Hawthorne by an old villa which he occupied near Florence. This old villa possessed a moss-covered tower, "haunted," as Hawthorne said in a letter to a friend, "by owls and by the ghost of a monk who was confined there in the thirteenth century previous to being burnt at the stake in the principal square in Florence." He also states in the same letter that he meant to put the old castle bodily in a romance that was then in his head, which he did by making the villa the old family castle of Donatello, although the scene of the story is laid in Rome.

After Hawthorne's return to America he began two other novels, one founded upon the old legend of the elixir of life. This story was probably suggested to him by Thoreau, who spoke of a house in which Hawthorne once

lived at Concord having been, a century or two before, the abode of a man who believed that he should never die. This subject was a charming one for Hawthorne's peculiar genius, but the story, with another, *The Dolliver Romance*, was interrupted by the death of Hawthorne in 1864.

In point of literary art the romances of Hawthorne are the finest work yet done in America, and their author was a man of high imagination, lofty morality, and pure ideals; an artist in the noblest meaning of the word.

CHAPTER IX

GEORGE BANCROFT

1800–1891

Seventy years ago the Round Hill School at Northampton, Mass., was perhaps the most famous school in New England. The founder, George Bancroft, had modelled it upon a celebrated school in Switzerland, in the hope that it would prove a starting-point for a broader system of elementary training than had yet existed in America, and everything was done to develop the physical and moral, as well as the mental, traits of the pupils. The school was beautifully situated, commanding a superb view, and had, besides the school-rooms, a gymnasium and play-rooms that were kept warm in cold weather and furnished with tools for carpentering. Here the boys could make bows and arrows, squirrel-traps, kites, sleds, and whatever their fancy dic-

tated. There were large play-grounds on the slopes of the hill, and here was the village of "Cronyville," every house, hut, or shanty in which had been built and was owned by the boys themselves. There were many varieties of architecture in "Cronyville," but each dwelling had at least a large chimney and a small store-room. After school hours each shanty was its owner's castle, where entertainments were held, and the guests feasted with roasted corn, nuts, or apples, which the entire company had helped to prepare on the hearth of the wide chimney. Sometimes the feast was enlivened by recitations, poems, and addresses by the pupils, among whom was at one time the future historian, John Lothrop Motley, and very often the festivities would end in one of those earnest talks that boys fall into sometimes when tired out with play. Bancroft's assistant and partner in the school was Dr. Cogswell, who superintended the course of study, which was carried out by the best teachers procurable in America, England, and France. The boys were in the main good students, some of them brilliant ones, and they

enjoyed so much freedom that their spirits gained them sometimes an unenviable reputation. The solemn keeper of a certain inn on the stage line between Northampton and Boston suffered so much from their pranks that he refused to allow them to stop over night, and only consented to give them dinner upon promise of good behavior.

The school became so popular that the best families in all parts of the country sent their boys there, but, financially, it was not a success, and after seven years' trial Bancroft was forced to abandon it, though his partner struggled on a few years longer. If the experiment had been entirely successful the cause of education might have been advanced fifty years ahead of the old method, for both founders were men devoted to the cause of education and longed to see newer and broader methods supersede the old ones.

As a boy Bancroft had studied at the Exeter Academy; finishing his course there he entered Harvard at thirteen, was graduated in his seventeenth year, and a year later was sent abroad by Harvard to fit himself for a tutorship in the

University. During his four years' absence he studied modern languages and literatures, Greek philosophy and antiquities, and some natural history. But he made history the special object of study, and bent all his energies to acquiring as wide a knowledge as possible of the sources and materials that make up the records of modern history. During his vacations he visited the different countries of Europe, travelling in regular student fashion. He would rise at dawn, breakfast by candlelight, and then fill the morning with visits to picture galleries, cathedrals, and all the wonders of foreign towns; after a light luncheon he would start again on his sightseeing, or visit some person of note, meeting during his travels almost every distinguished man in Europe. At night, if not too tired, he would study still politics, languages, and history, and when he returned to America he had made such good use of his time that he was equipped for almost any position in its intellectual life.

His obligations to Harvard led him to accept a tutorship there, which, however, proved so distasteful to him that he only held it one year It

was after this experience that he founded his school at Round Hill. During the years that he was trying to make the Round Hill school a model for boys' schools, the idea of his work as the historian of the United States came to him. Undismayed by the scope of the work, which he meant should include the history of the United States from the time of the landing of Columbus to the adoption of the Constitution in 1789, Bancroft, month after month, settled the plan more definitely in his mind; and when the time came for him to begin the work he only looked forward eagerly to the task of writing the records of three hundred years of the world's progress during the most absorbing period known to history. It is doubtful if at this time there was any other man living better qualified for this task than Bancroft. He had been a student of history and politics since boyhood. He had traced the stream of history from its sources in the East through the rise of the great modern nations. He had mastered the politics of the ancient world, whose language, literature, and art were also familiar to him, and civilized

Europe had been his field of study during the years which leave the most profound impressions upon the mind.

To him the rise and establishment of the United States as a great nation presented itself as one of the most brilliant passages of the world's history, and no labor seemed tiresome which should fittingly chronicle that event.

Besides his literary requirements Bancroft possessed eminent qualities for practical life. He was successively Governor of Massachusetts, Secretary of the Navy, and for a time Acting-Secretary of War; he served his country as Minister to Great Britain. He was made Minister to Prussia and afterward Minister to Germany when that country took its place as a united nation. Some of the most important treaties between the United States and foreign powers were made during Bancroft's diplomatic career, and in every act of his political life showed a talent for practical affairs. While he was Secretary of the Navy he founded the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Previous to this there was no good system by

which the boys who desired to enter the navy could receive instruction in any other branch than that of practical seamanship. In the old navy the middies were taught, while afloat, by the chaplains, who gave them lessons in odd hours in writing, arithmetic, and navigation ; if the pupils were idle they were reported to the captain, whose discipline was far from gentle. A boy eager to learn could pick up a great deal by asking questions and noticing what was going on about him, and sometimes the officers would volunteer their help in a difficult subject. Later each ship had one regular school-master, who made the voyage with the ship, twenty middies being appointed to each man-of-war. This system was superseded by schools, which were established at the different navy-yards, and which the boys attended in the intervals of sea duty ; but, as in the case of the other methods, the instruction was desultory, and the pupils had not the advantage of education enjoyed by the cadets of the West Point Military Academy, though it was evident the necessity for it was the same.

Bancroft brought to the office of Secretary of the Navy his old love for broad principles of education, and eight months after he took office the United States Naval Academy was in full operation, with a corps of instructors of the first merit, and with a complement of pupils that spoke well for the national interest in the cause. At first the course was for five years, the first and last of which only were spent at the Academy and the rest at sea, but this was later modified to its present form. Bancroft's generous policy placed the new institution upon a firm basis, and it became at once a vital force in the life of the United States Navy.

Bancroft began his history while still at Round Hill, and published the first volume in 1834. Previous to beginning his history he had published a small volume of verse, a Latin Reader, and a book on Greek politics for the use of the Round Hill School, and various translations and miscellaneous writings in the different periodicals of the day. But none of these had seemed serious work to him, and he brought to his history a mind fresh to literary labor, and

a fund of general information that was invaluable.

While he was minister to Great Britain he visited the state archives of England, France, and Germany for additional historical material. From this time he devoted himself as exclusively to his work as the diplomatic positions he held would allow.

His official administration in his own country was also far-reaching. Besides the establishment of the Naval Academy, it was he who, while acting as Secretary of War *pro tem.*, gave the famous order for General Taylor to move forward to the western boundary of Texas, which had been annexed to the United States after seceding from Mexico and setting up as a republic. General Taylor's appearance on the borders was the signal to Mexico that the United States intended to defend the new territory, and eventually led to the war with Mexico, by which the United States received the territorry of New Mexico and California.

When the lookout on the Pinta called out "Land ho!" he really uttered the first word of

American history, and Bancroft's narrative begins almost at this point. The first volume embraces the early French and Spanish voyages; the settlement of the Colonies; descriptions of colonial life in New England and Virginia; the fall and restoration of the house of Stuart in England, which led to such important results in American history, and Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia, which was the first note of warning to England that the American Colonies would not tolerate English injustice without a protest. To the reader who loves to find in history facts more marvellous than any imaginations of fairy lore, the first volume of Bancroft's history must ever be a region of delight. The picturesque figure of Columbus fronting undismayed the terrors of that unknown sea, which the geographers of the period peopled with demons and monsters; the adventures of the French and Spanish courtiers in search of fabled rivers and life-giving fountains; the trials of the gold-seekers, De Soto, Navarez, Cabeça de Vaca, and others, who sought for the riches of the romantic East; and the heroic suffering of those innumerable bands who

first looked upon the wonders of the New World, and opened the way to its great career, are such stories as are found in the sober history of no other country. To the Old World, whose beginnings of history were lost in the mists of the past, this vision of the New World, with its beauty of mountains, river, and forest, with its inexhaustible wealth and its races yet living in the primitive conditions of remote antiquity, was indeed a wonder hardly to be believed. It is something to be present at the birth of a new world, and Bancroft has followed the voyagers and settlers in their own spirit, made their adventures his own, and given to the reader a brilliant as well as faithful picture of the historic beginning of the American continent.

In his second volume Bancroft takes up the history of the Dutch in America; of the occupations of the Valley of the Mississippi by the French; of the expulsion of the French from Canada by the English, and the minor events which went toward the accomplishment of these objects. Here are introduced the romantic story of Acadia and the picturesque side of Indian life.

"The Indian mother places her child, as spring does its blossoms, upon the boughs of the trees while she works," says Bancroft in describing the sleeping-places of the Indian babies, and we see the same sympathetic touch throughout his descriptions of these dark children of the forest, to whom the white man came as a usurper of their rights and destroyer of their woodland homes.

The remaining volumes of the history consist almost entirely of the causes which led up to the American Revolution, the Revolution itself, and its effect upon Europe. One-half of the whole work is devoted to this theme, which is treated with a philosophical breadth that makes it comparable to the work of the greatest historians. Here we are led to see that, besides its influence upon the history of the New World, the American Revolution was one of the greatest events in the world's history; that it followed naturally from the revolt of the Netherlands against Spain and the Revolution of the English people against the tyranny of Charles I., and that, like them, its highest mission was to vindicate the cause of liberty.

In two other volumes, entitled *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States*, Bancroft gave a minute and careful description of the consolidation of the States into an individual nation after the Revolution, and the draughting and adopting of the Constitution by which they have since been governed. This, with some miscellaneous papers, among which may be mentioned the dramatic description of the Battle of Lake Erie, comprise the remainder of Bancroft's contribution to American literature.

Bancroft said that there were three qualities necessary to the historian: A knowledge of the evil in human nature; that events are subordinate to law, and that there is in man something greater than himself. To these qualifications, which he himself eminently possessed, may be added that of untiring industry, which distinguished his work. A passage was written over and over again, sometimes as many as eight times, until it suited him. And he was known to write an entire volume over. He carried his labor into his old age, being eighty-four years of age when

he made the last revision of the history which had occupied fifty years of his life.

His diplomatic career also extended over many years, he being seventy-four when at his own request the Government recalled him from the Court of Berlin where he was serving as Minister.

Bancroft died in 1891, in his ninety-second year. The most famous of his own countrymen united in tributes to his memory, and the sovereigns of Europe sent wreaths to place upon his coffin. As historian, diplomatist, and private citizen, he had honored his country as is the privilege of few.

CHAPTER X

EDGAR ALLAN POE

1809–1849

In the play-ground of an old-fashioned English school the boy Edgar Allan Poe, then in his ninth year, first entered that world of day-dreams, whose wonders he afterward transcribed so beautifully in his prose and poetry. The school was situated in the old town of Stoke Newington, and the quaint, sleepy village, with its avenues shaded by ancient trees and bordered by fragrant shrubberies, and with its country stillness broken only by the chime of the church-bell tolling the hour, seemed to the boy hardly a part of the real world. In describing it in after years he speaks of the dream-like and soothing influence it had upon his early life. The school building, also the village parsonage, as the master of the school was a clergyman, had a similar

effect; it was a large, rambling house, whose passages and rooms had a labyrinthine irregularity which charmed the young student and made him regard it almost as a place of enchantment. It had many nooks and corners in which one might lose one's self and dream day-dreams out of the books, poetry and history, with which it was pretty well stocked. The school-room itself was low-walled and ceiled with oak, and filled with desks and benches that had been hacked and hewed by generations of boys. It was of great size, and seemed to Poe the largest in the world. In this room he studied mathematics and the classics, while in the play-ground outside, which was surrounded by brick walls topped with mortar and broken glass, he spent many of his leisure hours, taking part in those sports so loved by the English school-boy. The boys were allowed beyond the grounds only three times in a week; twice on Sunday, when they went to church, and once during the week, when, guarded by two ushers, they were taken a solemn walk through the neighboring fields. All the rest of life lay within the walls that sep-

arated the school from the village streets. In this quiet spot Poe spent five years of his life, speaking of them afterward as most happy years and rich in those poetic influences which formed his character.

In his thirteenth year he left England and returned to America with his adopted parents, Mr. and Mrs. Allan, of Baltimore, spending the next four or five years of his life partly in their beautiful home and partly at school in Richmond.

The parents of Poe had died in his infancy. They had both possessed talent, his mother having been an actress of considerable repute, and from them he inherited gentle and winning manners and a talent for declamation, which, combined with his remarkable personal beauty, made him a favorite in the Allan home, where he was much petted and caressed. The child returned the interest of his adopted parents, and though he was sometimes wilful and obstinate he never failed in affection. To Mrs. Allan especially he always showed a devotion and gratitude that well repaid her for the love

and care she had bestowed upon the orphan child.

Though fond of books, especially books of poetry, and loving to be alone in some quiet place where he could indulge in the day-dreams that formed so large a part of his life, Poe yet had the fondness of a healthy boy for athletic sports, and some of his feats of strength are still found recorded in the old newspapers of Baltimore. Once on a hot day he swam a distance of seven miles on the James River against a swift tide; in a contest he leaped twenty-one feet on a level, and in other feats of strength he also excelled.

He was very fond of animals, and was always surrounded by pets which returned his affection with interest, and which, with the flowers he loved to tend and care for, took up many of his leisure hours.

When he was seventeen Poe entered the University of Virginia, where he remained not quite a year, distinguishing himself as a student of the classics and modern languages. Upon his return to Baltimore he had a disagreement with

his foster-father because of some college debts, and though Poe was very much in the wrong he refused to admit it, and, leaving the house in a fit of anger, went to live with his aunt, Mrs. Clemm. He had already published a volume of poems, and now being forced to depend upon himself he issued a second edition. But this brought him neither fame nor money, and after a two years' struggle with poverty he was glad to accept a cadetship at West Point, obtained for him through the influence of Mr. Allan. Mrs. Allan had in the meantime died, and in her death Poe lost his best friend, one who had been ever ready to forgive his faults, to believe in his repentance, and to have faith in his promises of amendment.

Poe was charmed with the life at West Point, and in his first enthusiasm decided that a soldier's career was the most glorious in the world. The hard study, the strict discipline, the rigid law and order of cadet life seemed only admirable, and he soon stood at the head of his class. But it was impossible that this enthusiasm should last long. Poe was endowed by nature

with the dreamy and artistic temperament of the poet, and discipline and routine could not fail to become in a short time unbearable. When this period arrived the prospective life of the soldier lost its charm, and he was seized with a desire to leave the Academy and bid a final farewell to military life. It was impossible to do this without the consent of his guardian, and as Mr. Allan refused this, Poe was forced to carry his point in his own way. This he did by lagging in his studies, writing poetry when he should have been solving problems, and refusing point blank to obey orders. Military discipline could not long brook this. Poe was court-martialed, and, pleading guilty, was discharged from the Academy, disgraced but happy. During his stay there he had published a third edition of his poems, containing a number of pieces not included in the other editions. It was dedicated to his fellow-cadets, and was subscribed for by many of the students.

Almost immediately after his departure from West Point, Poe went to live with his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, and her daughter Virginia, who

afterward became his wife; and from this time forward he never seems to have had any serious idea of a career otherwise than literary. In 1832, when he was in his twenty-fourth year, prizes were offered by a Baltimore paper for the best short story and best poem that should be presented. Among the material offered in competition the judges found a small collection of tales bound together, and written in neat Roman characters. These stories were the last ones read by the committee which had about decided that there had been nothing offered worthy the prize; their unmistakable signs of genius were instantly recognized. It was decided that the prize of one hundred dollars belonged to this author, and out of the series the story entitled *A Manuscript Found in a Bottle* was selected as the prize tale, though all were so excellent that it was difficult to determine which was best. This little volume had been submitted by Poe, and when the poetry came to be examined it was found also that the best poem in the collection was his. He was not, however, awarded the prize for poetry, that being given to another

competitor, whose work the committee thought worthy the second prize, in view of the fact that Poe had obtained the first.

It was in this manner that Poe was introduced to the world of literature, his previous productions having excited no attention other than that generally given to the work of a clever or erratic boy. The workmanship of these stories was so fine and the genius so apparent as to give them a distinct place in American fiction, a place to which at that time the promise of Hawthorne pointed. Besides the reputation and money thus earned, the story brought him a stanch friend in the person of Mr. Kennedy, one of the members of the committee, who, from that time, was devoted to the interests of the young author.

Poe now became busy with the composition of those beautiful tales which appeared from time to time in the periodicals of the day, and which speedily won him a reputation both in America and Europe. He was also employed in editorial work for different magazines, and became known as the first American critic who

had made criticism an art. It was his dream at this time to establish a magazine of his own, and for many years one project after another with this object in view was tried and abandoned. He was never able to start the magazine and felt the disappointment keenly always. Through all his disappointments he still lived much in that dream-world which had always been so real to him, and much of his best work found there its inspiration. His exquisite story of *Ligeia* came to him first in a dream. This world, so unreal to many, was to Poe as real as his actual life. Like Coleridge in English literature, he had the power of presenting the visions which came to him in sleep or in his waking dreams, surrounded by their own atmosphere of mystery and unreality, thus producing an effect which awed as well as fascinated. No other American writer has ever brought from the dream-world such beautiful creations, which charm and mystify at the same time, and force the most unimaginative reader to believe for the time in the existence of this elusive realm of faery.

Poe's poems have this same character, and found their inspiration in the same source.

While engaged in editorial work in New York Poe wrote his first great poem, *The Raven*, which was first published under an assumed name. It was not until he recited the poem by request at a gathering of the literary workers of New York that his authorship was suspected. Immediately afterward the poem was published under his name. It was regarded by critics in England and America as illustrating the highest poetic genius. From this time Poe, who had hitherto been ranked among the best prose writers of his native land, now took precedence among the poets. It is, indeed, as a poet that he is always thought of first. It was during the next five years after the publication of *The Raven* that he produced the series of remarkable poems that has given him immortality. *The Bells*, the original draft of which consisted of only eighteen lines, is, perhaps, next to *The Raven*, the poem that has brought him the most fame. But the number of exquisite shorter poems which he produced would in themselves

give him the highest rank as a poet. Chief among these is the little idyll, *Annabel Lee*, a transcription of the ideal love which existed between Poe and his young wife.

While engaged in literary work in New York Poe lived for the greater part of the time in the suburb of Fordham, in an unpretentious but charming cottage, bowered in trees and surrounded by the flower garden, which was the especial pride of the poet and his wife. Perhaps the happiest days of his life were spent in this quiet place, to which he would retire after the business of the day was over, and occupy himself with the care of the flowers and of the numerous pet birds and animals, which were regarded as a part of the family.

Over this otherwise happy existence hung always the clouds of poverty and sickness, his wife having been an invalid for many years. It was in this little cottage, at a time when Poe's fortunes were at their lowest ebb, that his wife died amid poverty so extreme that the family could not even afford a fire to heat the room in which she lay dying. Poe remained at Ford-

ham a little over two years after his wife's death, leaving it only a few months before his own death, in October, 1849.

Poe is undoubtedly to be ranked among the greatest writers of American literature. His prose works would grace any literary period; his poetry is alive with the fire and beauty of genius, and his criticisms marked a new era in critical writing in America.

Twenty-six years after his death a monument was erected to his memory in the city of Baltimore, mainly through the efforts of the teachers of the public schools. Some of the most distinguished men of America were present at the unveiling to do honor to the poet whose work was such a noble contribution to the art of his native land.

CHAPTER XI

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1803–1882

Walking the streets of Boston, in the days when old-fashioned gambrel-roofed houses and gardens filled the space now occupied by dingy warehouses, might be seen a serious-eyed boy who, whether at work or at play, seemed always to his companions to live in a world a little different from their own. This was not the dream-world so familiar to childhood, but another which few children enter, and those only who seem destined to be teachers of their race. One enters this world just as the world of day-dreams is entered, by forgetting the real world for a time and letting the mind think what thoughts it will. In this world Milton spent many long hours when a child, and Bunyan made immortal in literature the memory of these dreams of

youth. Never any thought of the real world enters this place, whose visitors see but one thing, a vision of the soul as it journeys through life. To Bunyan this seemed but a journey over dangerous roads, through lonely valleys, and over steep mountain sides; to Milton it seemed a war between good and evil; to this little New-England boy it seemed but a vision of duty bravely accomplished, and in this he was true to the instincts of that Puritan race to which he belonged. The boy's father was the Rev. William Emerson, pastor of the First Church in Boston, who had died when this son, Ralph Waldo, was in his ninth year; but for three years longer the family continued to reside in the quaint old parsonage, in which Emerson had been born. The father had left his family so poor that the congregation of the First Church voted an annuity of five hundred dollars to the widow for seven years, and many were the straits the little family was put to in order to eke out a comfortable living. The one ambition was to have the three boys educated. An aunt who lived in the family declared that they were born to be educated,

and that it must be brought about somehow. The mother took boarders, and the two eldest boys, Ralph and Edward, helped do the housework. In a little letter written to his aunt, in his tenth year, Ralph mentions that he rose before six in the morning in order to help his brother make the fire and set the table for prayers before calling his mother—so early did the child realize that he must be the burden-sharer of the family. Poverty there was, but also much happiness in the old parsonage, whose dooryard of trees and shrubs, joined on to the neighboring gardens, made a pleasant outlook into the world. When school work was over, and household duty disposed of, very often the brothers would retire to their own room and there find their own peculiar joy in reading tales of Plutarch, reciting poetry, and declaiming some favorite piece, for solitude was loved by all, and the great authors of the world were well studied by these boys, whose bedchamber was so cold that Plato or Cicero could only be indulged in when the reader was wrapped so closely in his cloak that Emerson afterward remarked, the smell of

woollen was forever afterward associated with the Greek classics. Ralph attended the Latin Grammar School, and had private lessons besides in writing, which he seems to have acquired with difficulty, one of his school-fellows telling long afterward how his tongue moved up and down as the pen laboriously traversed the page, and how on one occasion he even played truant to avoid the dreaded task, for which misdemeanor he was promptly punished by a diet of bread and water. It was at this period that he wrote verses on the War of 1812, and began an epic poem which one of his school friends illustrated. Such skill did he attain in verse-making that his efforts were delivered on exhibition days, being rendered with such impressiveness by the young author that his mates considered nothing could be finer.

From the Latin school Emerson passed to Harvard in his fifteenth year, entering as "President's Freshman," a post which brought with it a certain annual sum and a remission of fees in exchange for various duties, such as summoning unruly students to the president, announcing the

orders of the faculty, and serving as waiter at commons.

At college Emerson was noted as a student more familiar with general literature than with the college text-books, and he was an ardent member of a little book club which met to read and discuss current literature, the book or magazine under discussion being generally bought by the member who had the most pocket-money at the time. But in spite of a dislike for routine study, Emerson was graduated with considerable honor, and almost immediately afterward set about the business of school-teaching.

But Emerson was not able to take kindly to teaching, and in his twenty-first year began preparations to enter the ministry. These were interrupted for a while by a trip South in search of health, but he was finally able to accept a position as assistant minister at the Second Church. A year or two later he was again obliged to leave his work and go abroad for his health. After he returned home he decided to leave the ministry, and he began that series of lectures which speedily made him famous and which

have determined his place in American literature.

From this time Emerson began to be recognized as one of the thought-leaders of his age. To him literature appealed as a means of teaching those spiritual lessons that brace the soul to brave endurance. While Hawthorne was living in the world of romance, Poe and Lowell creating American poetry, and Bancroft and Motley placing American historical prose on the highest level, Emerson was throwing his genius into the form of moral essays for the guidance of conduct. To him had been revealed in all its purity that vision of the perfect life which had been the inspiration of his Puritan ancestors. And with the vision had come that gift of expression which enabled him to preserve it in the noblest literary form. These essays embrace every variety of subject, for, to a philosopher like Emerson every form of life and every object of nature represented some picture of the soul. When he devoted himself to this task he followed a true light, for he became and remains to many the inspiration of his age, the American writer above all oth-

ers whose thought has moulded the souls of men.

Much of Emerson's work found form in verse of noble vein, for he was a poet as well as philosopher. He also was connected with one or two magazines, and became one of the most popular of American lecturers; with the exception of several visits to Europe and the time given to his lecturing and other short trips, Emerson spent his life at Concord, Mass. To this place came annually, in his later years, the most gifted of his followers, to conduct what was known as the Concord School of Philosophy. Throughout his whole life Emerson preserved that serenity of soul which is the treasure of such spiritually gifted natures.

He died at Concord in 1882, and was buried in the village cemetery, which he had consecrated thirty years before.

CHAPTER XII

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

1807–1882

Almost any summer day in the early part of the century a blue-eyed, brown-haired boy might have been seen lying under a great apple-tree in the garden of an old house in Portland, forgetful of everything else in the world save the book he was reading.

The boy was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and the book might have been *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Arabian Nights*, or *Don Quixote*, all of which were prime favorites, or, possibly, it was Irving's *Sketch-Book*, of which he was so fond that even the covers delighted him, and whose charm remained unbroken throughout life. Years afterward, when, as a famous man of letters, he was called upon to pay his tribute to the memory of Irving, he could think of no more

tender praise than to speak with grateful affection of the book which had so fascinated him as a boy, and whose pages still led him back into the "haunted chambers of youth."

Portland was in those days a town of wooden houses, with streets shaded with trees, and the waters of the sea almost dashing up to its doorways. At its back great stretches of woodland swept the country as far as the eye could see, and low hills served as watch-towers over the deep in times of war. It was during Longfellow's childhood that the British ship Boxer was captured by the Enterprise in the famous sea-fight of the War of 1812; the two captains, who had fallen in the battle, were buried side by side in the cemetery at Portland, and the whole town came together to do honor to the dead commanders. Long afterward Longfellow speaks of this incident in his poem entitled *My Lost Youth*, and recalls the sound of the cannon booming across the waters, and the solemn stillness that followed the news of the victory.

It is in the same poem that we have a picture of the Portland of his early life, and are given

glimpses of the black wet wharves, where the ships were moored all day long as they worked, and also the Spanish sailors "with bearded lips" who seemed as much a mystery to the boy as the ships themselves. These came and went across the sea, always watched and waited for with greatest interest by the children, who loved the excitement of the unloading and loading, the shouts of the surveyors who were measuring the contents of cask and hogshead; the songs of the negroes working the pulleys, the jolly good-nature of the seamen strolling through the streets, and, above all, the sight of the strange treasures that came from time to time into one home or another—bits of coral, beautiful sea-shells, birds of resplendent plumage, foreign coins, which looked odd even in Portland, where all the money nearly was Spanish—and the hundred and one things dear to the hearts of children and sailors.

Longfellow's boyhood was almost a reproduction of that of some Puritan ancestor a century before. He attended the village school, played ball in summer and skated in winter, went to church twice every Sunday, and, when service was

over, looked at the curious pictures in the family Bible, and heard from his mother's lips the stories of David and Jonathan and Joseph, and at all times had food for his imagination in the view of bay stretching seaward, on one hand, and on the other valley farms and groves spreading out to the west.

But although the life was severe in its simplicity, it was most sweet and wholesome for the children who grew up in the home nest, guarded by the love that was felt rather than expressed, and guided into noble conceptions of the beauty and dignity of living. This home atmosphere impressed itself upon Longfellow unconsciously, as did the poetic influences of nature, and had just as lasting and inspiring an effect upon his character, so that truth, duty, fine courage were always associated with the freshness of spring, the early dawn, the summer sunshine, and the lingering sadness of twilight.

It is the spiritual insight, thus early developed, that gives to Longfellow's poetry some of its greatest charms.

It was during his school-boy days that Long-

fellow published his first bit of verse. It was inspired by hearing the story of a famous fight which took place on the shores of a small lake called Lovell's Pond, between the hero Lovell and the Indians. Longfellow was deeply impressed by this story and threw his feeling of admiration into four stanzas, which he carried with a beating heart down to the letter-box of the *Portland Gazette*, taking an opportunity to slip the manuscript in when no one was looking.

A few days later Longfellow watched his father unfold the paper, read it slowly before the fire, and finally leave the room, when the sheet was grasped by the boy and his sister, who shared his confidence, and hastily scanned. The poem was there in the "Poets' Corner" of the *Gazette*, and Longfellow was so filled with joy that he spent the greater part of the remainder of the day in reading and re-reading the verses, becoming convinced toward evening that they possessed remarkable merit. His happiness was dimmed, however, a few hours later, when the father of a boy friend, with whom he was passing the evening, pronounced the verses stiff and entirely

lacking in originality, a criticism that was quite true and that was harder to bear because the critic had no idea who the author was. Longfellow slipped away as soon as possible to nurse his wounded feelings in his own room, but instead of letting the incident discourage him, began, with renewed vigor, to write verses, epigrams, essays, and even tragedies, which he produced in a literary partnership with one of his friends. None of these effusions had any literary value, being no better than any boy of thirteen or fourteen would produce if he turned his attention to composition instead of bat and ball.

Longfellow remained in Portland until his sixteenth year, when he went to Bowdoin College, entering the sophomore class. Here he remained for three years, gradually winning a name for scholarship and character that was second to none.

His love for reading still continued, Irving remaining a favorite author, while Cooper was also warmly appreciated. From the *Sketch-Book* he would turn to the exciting pages of *The Spy*, and the announcement of a new work by either

of their authors was looked forward to as an event of supreme importance. From time to time he wrote verses which appeared in the periodicals of the day, and as his college life neared its close he began to look toward literature as the field for his future work, and it was with much disappointment that he learned that his father wished him to study law.

But what the effect of such a course may have had upon his mind so filled with the love of poetry, and so consecrated to the ideal, will never be known, as the end of his college life brought to him a chance which, for the moment, entirely satisfied the desire of his heart.

This was an offer from the college trustees that he should visit Europe for the purpose of fitting himself for a professorship of modern languages, and that upon his return he should fill that chair, newly established at Bowdoin.

This was the happiest fortune that could come to Longfellow in the beginning of his literary career. Accordingly, at the age of nineteen, he sailed for France in good health,

with fine prospects, and with as fair a hope for the future as ever was given.

Longfellow remained abroad three years, studying and absorbing all the new conditions which were broadening his mind, and fitting him for his after-career. He visited France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, meeting with adventure everywhere, and storing up memory after memory that came back to his call in after-years to serve some purpose of his art.

We have thus preserved in his works the impressions that Europe then made upon a young American, who had come there to supplement his education by studying at the universities, and whose mind was alive to all the myriad forms of culture denied in his own land.

The vividness of these early impressions was seen in all his work, and was perhaps the first reflection of the old poetic European influence that began to be felt in much American poetry, where the charm of old peasant love-songs and roundelays, heard for centuries among the lower classes of Spain, France, and Italy, was wrought into translations and transcriptions so perfect

and spirited that they may almost rank with original work.

One of Longfellow's great pleasures while on this trip was the meeting with Irving in Spain, where the latter was busy upon his *Life of Columbus;* and Irving's kindness on this occasion was always affectionately remembered.

Longfellow returned to America after three years' absence, and at once began his duties at Bowdoin College, where he remained three years, when he left to take a professorship at Harvard, which he had accepted with the understanding that he was to spend a year and a half abroad before commencing his work.

The results of his literary labors while at Bowdoin were the publication of a series of sketches of European life called *Outre Mer*, in two volumes; a translation from the Spanish of the *Coplas de Manrique*, and some essays in the *North American Review* and other periodicals. And considering the demand upon his time which his college duties made, this amount of finished work speaks well for his industry, since it does not include a number of text-books

prepared for the use of his pupils, and numberless papers, translations, and other literary miscellany necessary to his work as a teacher of foreign languages. *Outre Mer*, which had first appeared in part in a periodical, was very favorably received. It was really the story of picturesque Europe translated by the eye and heart of a young poet.

After his return to America Longfellow settled down to the routine of college work, which was interrupted for the next ten years only by his literary work, which from this time on began to absorb him more and more. Two years after his return he published his first volume of poems and his romance *Hyperion*. In *Hyperion* Longfellow related some of the experiences of his own travels under the guise of the hero, who wanders through Europe, and the book is full of the same biographical charm that belongs to *Outre Mer*. Here the student life of the German youth, the songs they sang, the books they read, and even their favorite inns are noted, while the many translations of German poetry opened a new field of delight to American readers. It

was well received by the public, who appreciated its fine poetic fancy and its wealth of serious thought.

But it was not by his prose that Longfellow touched the deepest sympathies of his readers, and the publication of his first volume of poetry a few months later showed his real position in the world of American letters. This little book, which was issued under the title *Voices of the Night*, consisted of the poems that had so far appeared in the various magazines and papers, a few poems written in his college days, and some translations from the French, German, and Spanish poets.

In this volume occurs some of Longfellow's choicest works, the gem of the book being the celebrated *A Psalm of Life.*

It is from this point that Longfellow goes onward always as the favorite poet of the American people. The *Psalm of Life* had been published previously in a magazine without the author's name, and it had no sooner been read than it seemed to find its way into every heart. Ministers read it to their congregations all over

the country, and it was sung as a hymn in many churches. It was copied in almost every newspaper in the United States; it was recited in every school. To young and old alike it brought its message, and its voice was recognized as that of a true leader. The author of *Outre Mer* and *Hyperion* had here touched hands with millions of his brothers and sisters, and the clasp was never unloosened again while he lived.

In the same collection occurs *The Footsteps of Angels*, another well-beloved poem, and one in which the spirit of home-life is made the inspiration.

Longfellow's poems now followed one another in rapid succession, appearing generally at first in some magazine and afterward in book form in various collections under different titles.

His greatest contributions to American literature are his *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha*, and a score of shorter poems, which in themselves would give the author a high place in any literature.

In *Evangeline* Longfellow took for his theme the pathetic story of the destruction of the

Acadian villages by the English during the struggle between the English and French for the possession of Canada. In this event many families and friends were separated never again to be reunited, and the story of *Evangeline* is the fate of two young lovers who were sent away from their homes in different ships, and who never met again until both were old, and one was dying in the ward of a public hospital. Longfellow has made of this sad story a wondrously beautiful tale, that reads like an old legend of Grecian Arcadia.

The description of the great primeval forests, stretching down to the sea; of the villages and farms scattered over the land as unprotected as the nests of the meadow lark; of the sowing and harvesting of the peasant folk, with their *fêtes* and churchgoing, their weddings and festivals, and the pathetic search of Evangeline for her lost lover Gabriel among the plains of Louisiana, all show Longfellow in his finest mood as a poet whom the sorrows of mankind touched always with reverent pity, as well as a writer of noble verse.

Everywhere that the English language is read *Evangeline* has passed as the most beautiful folk-story that America has produced, and the French Canadians, the far-away brothers of the Acadians, have included Longfellow among their national poets. Among them *Evangeline* is known by heart, and the cases are not rare where the people have learned English expressly for the purpose of reading Longfellow's poem in the original, a wonderful tribute to the poet who could thus touch to music one of the saddest memories of their race.

In *Hiawatha* Longfellow gave to the Indian the place in poetry that had been given him by Cooper in prose. Here the red man is shown with all his native nobleness still unmarred by the selfish injustice of the whites, while his inferior qualities are seen only to be those that belong to mankind in general.

Hiawatha is a poem of the forests and of the dark-skinned race who dwelt therein, who were learned only in forest lore and lived as near to nature's heart as the fauns and satyrs of old. Into this legend Longfellow has put all the

poetry of the Indian nature, and has made his hero, Hiawatha, a noble creation that compares favorably with the King Arthur of the old British romances. Like Arthur, Hiawatha has come into the world with a mission for his people; his birth is equally mysterious and invests him at once with almost supernatural qualities. Like Arthur, he seeks to redeem his kingdom from savagery and to teach the blessing of peace.

From first to last Hiawatha moves among the people, a real leader, showing them how to clear their forests, to plant grain, to make for themselves clothing of embroidered and painted skins, to improve their fishing-grounds, and to live at peace with their neighbors. Hiawatha's own life was one that was lived for others. From the time when he was a little child and his grandmother told him all the fairy-tales of nature, up to the day when, like Arthur, he passed mysteriously away through the gates of the sunset, all his hope and joy and work were for his people. He is a creature that could only have been born from a mind as pure and poetic as that of Longfellow.

All the scenes and images of the poem are so true to nature that they seem like very breaths from the forest. We move with Hiawatha through the dewy birchen aisles, learn with him the language of the nimble squirrel and of the wise beaver and mighty bear, watch him build his famous canoe, and spend hours with him fishing in the waters of the great inland sea, bordered by the pictured rocks, painted by nature herself. Longfellow's first idea of the poem was suggested, it is said, by his hearing a Harvard student recite some Indian tales. Searching among the various books that treated of the American Indian, he found many legends and incidents that preserved fairly well the traditional history of the Indian race, and grouping these around one central figure and filling in the gaps with poetic descriptions of the forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, and plains, which made up the abode of these picturesque people, he thus built up the entire poem. The metre used is that in which the Kalevala, the national epic of the Finns is written, and the Finnish hero, Wainamoinen, in his gift of song and his brave

adventures, is not unlike the great Hiawatha. Among Longfellow's other long poems are: *The Spanish Student*, a dramatic poem founded upon a Spanish romance; *The Divine Tragedy*, and *The Golden Legend*, founded upon the life of Christ; *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, a tale of Puritan love-making in the time of the early settlers, and *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, which were a series of poems of adventure supposed to be related in turn by the guests at an inn.

But it is with such poems as *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha*, and the shorter famous poems like *A Psalm of Life*, *Excelsior*, *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, *The Building of the Ship*, *The Footsteps of Angels* that his claim as the favorite poet of America rests. *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha* marked an era in American literature in introducing themes purely American, while of the famous shorter poems each separate one was greeted almost with an ovation. *The Building of the Ship* was never read during the struggle of the Civil War without raising the audience to a passion of enthusiasm, and so in each of

these shorter poems Longfellow touched with wondrous sympathy the hearts of his readers. Throughout the land he was revered as the poet of the home and heart, the sweet singer to whom the fireside and family gave ever sacred and beautiful meanings.

Some poems on slavery, a prose tale called *Kavanagh*, and a translation of *The Divine Comedy* of Dante must also be included among Longfellow's works; but these have never reached the success attained by his more popular poems which are known by heart by millions to whom they have been inspiration and comfort.

Longfellow died in Cambridge in 1882, in the same month in which was written his last poem, *The Bells of San Blas*, which concludes with these words:

"It is daybreak everywhere."

CHAPTER XIII

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY

1814-1877

One day in the year 1827, a boy of thirteen first entered the chapel of Harvard College to take his seat there as a student. His schoolfellows looked at him curiously first, because of his remarkable beauty, and second because of his reputation as a linguist, a great distinction among boys who looked upon foreign tongues as so many traps for tripping their unlucky feet in the thorny paths of learning. He had come to Harvard from Mr. Bancroft's school at Northampton, where he was famous as a reader, writer, and orator, and was more admired, perhaps, than is good for any boy. Both pupils and masters recognized his talents and overlooked his lack of industry. But neither dreamed that their praise

was but the first tribute to the genius of the future historian, John Lothrop Motley.

Motley was born in Dorchester, a suburb of Boston, April 15, 1814. As a child he was delicate, a condition which fostered his great natural love for reading. He devoured books of every kind, history, poetry, plays, orations, and particularly the novels of Cooper and Scott. Not satisfied with reading about heroes, he must be a hero himself, and when scarcely eight he bribed a younger brother with sweetmeats to lie quiet, wrapped in a shawl, while he, mounted upon a stool, delivered Mark Antony's oration over the dead body of Cæsar. At eleven he began a novel, the scene of which was laid in the Housatonic Valley, because that name sounded grand and romantic. On Saturday afternoon he and his playmates, among whom was Wendell Phillips, would assemble in the garret of the Motley house, and in plumed hats and doublets enact tragedies or stirring melodramas. Comedy was too frivolous for these entertainments, in which Motley was always the leading spirit; the chief bandit, the heavy villain, the deadliest foe.

In the school-room also Motley led by divine right, and expected others to follow. Thus, in spite of his dislike for rigid rules of study, he was always before the class as one to be deferred to and honored wherever honor might be given. While still at college Motley seems to have had some notion of a literary career. His writing-desk was constantly crammed with manuscripts of plays, poetry, and sketches of character, which never found their way to print, and which were burned to make room for others when the desk became too full. With the exception of a few verses published in a magazine, this work of his college days served only for pastime. Graduated from Harvard at seventeen, Motley spent the next two years at a German university, where he lived the pleasant, social life of the German student, one of his friends and classmates being young Bismarck, afterward the great Chancellor, who was always fond of the handsome young American, whose wit was the life of the student company and whose powers of argument surpassed his own.

Coming back to America, Motley studied law

until 1841, when, in his twenty-seventh year, he received the appointment of Secretary of Legation to St. Petersburg.

His friends now looked forward to a brilliant diplomatic career for him, but the unfavorable climate soon led him to resign the appointment and return to America. But the St. Petersburg visit was not fruitless, for three years afterward he published an essay in the *North American Review* which showed a keen appreciation of Russian political conditions. The article was called "A Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great," and its appearance surprised the critics who had justly condemned a novel previously published by the young author. His essay portrayed the character of the great Peter, half king and half savage. It showed a full appreciation of the difficulties that hindered the establishment of a great monarchy, and paid due honor to that force of will, savage courage, and ideal patriotism that laid the foundations of Russia's greatness. The reader is made to see this fiery Sclav, building up a new Russia from his ice-fields and barren valleys; a Russia of great cities,

imperial armies, vast commerce, and splendid hopes. It was a brilliant and scholarly narrative of the achievement of a great man, and it placed Motley among the writers of highest promise.

A year later he began collecting materials for the serious work of his life. For his subject he chose the story of the old Frisians or Hollanders who rescued from the sea a few islands formed by the ooze and slime of ages, and laid thereon the foundations of a great nation. They raised dykes to keep back the sea, built canals to serve as roads, turned bogs into pasture-lands and morasses into grain-fields, fought with the Romans, founded cities, laid the foundations of the vast maritime commerce of to-day, and finally, in the sixteenth century, when the wealth of their merchants, the power of their cities, and the progress of their arts were the wonder of the world, met their worst foe in the person of their own king, Philip II.

From the beginning the Hollanders or Netherlanders had cherished a savage independence which commanded respect even in barbarous ages, and this characteristic insured a quarrel between

them and their ruler. Philip II. was King of Spain and of Sicily as well as of Holland. Born in Spain, he could not speak a word of Dutch. He was haughty, overbearing, and unscrupulous, and he resolved to make the Hollanders see in him a master as well as a king. Already in his father's reign there had been trouble because of the growing Protestantism which many of the Hollanders favored. Already some of the chief Dutch cities had been punished for resisting the Emperor's authority, and their burghers sentenced to kneel in sackcloth and beg him to spare their homes from destruction. These things happened in his father's time and had made an impression upon Philip II., who saw that in every case the royal power had been triumphant, and he believed himself invincible.

Motley painted the life of Philip from the day of his inauguration through all the years of revolt, bloodshed, and horror which marked his reign. He saw that this rebellion of the Hollanders meant less the discontent of a people with their king than the growth of a great idea, the idea that civil and religious liberty is the right

of all men and nations. To Motley's mind the struggle seemed like some old battle between giants and Titans. Unlike other historians, who looked over the world for a subject, rejecting first one and then another, Motley's subject took possession of him and would not be rejected. His work was born, as a great poem or picture is born, from a glimpse of things hidden from other eyes.

But at once he discovered that Prescott had already in contemplation a history of Philip II. This was a severe blow to all his hopes. But he resolved to see Prescott, lay the matter before him, and abide by his decision, feeling that the master of history, who was the author of the *Conquest of Mexico* and the *Conquest of Peru*, would be the best adviser of a young and unknown writer.

Prescott received the idea with the most generous kindness, advised Motley to undertake the work, and placed at his disposal all the material which he himself had collected for his own enterprise.

After several years the book appeared in 1856, under the title *The Rise of the Dutch Republic.*

To write this book Motley dwelt for years in the world of three hundred years ago, when the whole of Europe was shaken by the new Protestantism, when Raleigh and Drake were sailing the Atlantic and adding the shores of the new world to English dominion, the French settling Canada and the Mississippi Valley, Spain sending her mission priests to California, and the Huguenots establishing themselves in Florida. Thus the foundations of the American Republic were being laid, while Philip was striving to overthrow the freedom of the Netherlands.

Leaving the nineteenth century as far behind him as he could, Motley established himself successively at Berlin, Dresden, The Hague, and Brussels, in order to consult the libraries and archives of state which contained documents relating to the revolt of the Netherlands against Philip II. In speaking of his work in the libraries of Brussels, he says that at this time only dead men were his familiar friends, and that he was at home in any country, and he calls himself a worm feeding on musty mulberry leaves out of which he was to spin silk. Day after day, year

after year, he haunted the old libraries, whose shadows held so many secrets of the past, until the personalities of those great heroes who fought for the liberty of Holland were as familiar as the faces of his own children. William of Orange, called the Silent, the Washington of Dutch independence, Count Egmont, Van Horn, and all that band of heroes who espoused the cause of liberty, came to be comrades.

And the end rewarded the years of toil. Out of old mouldy documents and dead letters Motley recreated the Netherlands of the sixteenth century. Again were seen the great cities with their walls miles in extent, their gay streets, their palaces, and churches, and public buildings, and the great domains of the clergy, second to none in Europe. The nobles possessed magnificent estates and entertained their guests with jousts and tourneys like the great lords of England and France. The tradespeople and artisans who comprised the population of the cities were divided into societies or guilds, which were so powerful that no act of state could be passed without their consent, and so rich that to their entertainments

the proudest nobles came as guests, to see a luxuriousness which vied with that of kings. The Dutch artists were celebrated for their noble pictures, for their marvellous skill in wood and stone carving, and for the wonderful tapestries which alone would have made Dutch art famous.

In the midst of this prosperity Philip II. came to the throne, and soon after his coronation the entire Netherlands were in revolt. Motley has described this struggle like an eye-witness. We see the officers of the Inquisition dragging their victims daily to the torture-chamber, and the starved and dying rebels defending their cities through sieges which the Spanish army made fiendish in suffering. Motley's description of the siege of Leyden, and his portrait of William the Silent, are among the finest specimens of historical composition.

The work ends with the death of the Prince of Orange, this tragic event forming a fitting climax to the great revolution which had acknowledged him its hope and leader.

Motley carried the completed manuscript of *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* to London,

but failing to find a publisher willing to undertake such a work by an unknown author, he was obliged to produce it at his own expense. It met with the most flattering reception, and the reviews which appeared in England, France, and America placed Motley's name among the great historians. The book was soon translated into Dutch, German, and Russian.

Motley's two other great works were similar in character to the first. The second work, called *The History of the United Netherlands*, began with the death of William the Silent, and ended with the period known as the Twelve Years' Truce, when by common consent the independence of the Netherlands was recognized throughout Europe.

This work consists of four volumes, the first two having been published in 1860, and the remaining two in 1867.

These volumes embrace much of the history of England, which became the ally and friend of Holland, and are full of the great events which made up that epoch of English history. The names of Queen Elizabeth, the Duke of Leices-

ter, Lord Burghley, and the noble and chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney, who lost his life on one of the battle-fields of this war, figure as largely in its pages as those of the Dutch themselves. The war had ceased to be the revolt of Holland against Spain, and had become a mighty battle for the liberty of Europe. Every nation was interested in its progress, and all men knew that upon its success or failure would depend the fate of Europe for many centuries. In this work Motley's pen lost none of its art. The chapters follow one another in harmonious succession, the clear and polished style giving no hint of the obscurities of diplomatic letters, the almost illegible manuscripts, and the contradictory reports which often made up the original materials.

Like its predecessor, it was at once classed among the great histories of the world. *The Life of John of Barneveld*, who shares with William of Orange the glory of achieving Dutch independence, was the subject of Motley's next and last work. The book is not in a strict sense a biography. It is rather a narrative of the

quarrel of the Netherlands among themselves over theological questions. The country was now Protestant, and yet the people fought as fiercely over the different points of doctrine as when they were struggling for their independence. The book appeared in 1874, completing the series, which the author called *The History of the Eighty Years' War for Independence.*

During this period of literary work Motley was twice appointed to represent the United States at foreign courts. He was Minister to Austria from 1861 to 1866, and during the stormy period of the Civil War showed his powers as a statesman in his diplomatic relations with the Austrian Court, which honored him always both as a diplomatist and as a patriot, his devotion to his country being a proverb among his fellows.

In 1868 he was appointed Minister to England, but held the office only two years. On both these occasions Motley proved his ability to meet and master questions of state, and there is no doubt that, had fortune led him into active

political life, he would have made a brilliant reputation.

He died in May, 1877, and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, near London, England.

CHAPTER XIV

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

1811–1896

Harriet Beecher Stowe, the first distinguished woman writer of America, was born at Litchfield, Conn., in those old New England days when children were taught that good little girls must always speak gently, never tear their clothes, learn to knit and sew, and make all the responses properly in church. Such is her own story of her early education, to which is also added the item that on Sunday afternoons she was expected to repeat the catechism, and on the occasion of a visit to her grandmother, her aunt made her learn two catechisms, that of her own faith, the Episcopal, and that of Harriet's father, who was a Presbyterian minister. This discipline, however, had no depressing effect upon the child, whose family consisted of a half-

dozen healthy, clever brothers and sisters, a father who was loved more than revered even in those days when a minister was regarded with awe, and a stepmother whose devotion made the home-life a thing of beauty to be held in all after-years in loving memory.

The old Presbyterian parsonage where Harriet was born had in it one room that was the child's chief delight. This was her father's study, in a corner of which she loved to ensconce herself with her favorite books gathered around her, and read or day-dream, while her father sat opposite in his great writing-chair composing the sermon for the next Sunday. Children's books were not plentiful in those days, and Miss Edgeworth's *Tales* and Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* were her principal resource, until one joyful day, rummaging in a barrel of old sermons, she came upon a copy of *The Arabian Nights*. These flowers of fairy lore took healthy root in the imagination of the little Puritan child, whose mind had hitherto resembled the prim flower-beds of the New England gardens, where grew only native plants. The old stories

opened a new world of thought, and into this unknown realm she entered, rambling amid such wonderful scenes that never again could their mysterious charm cease; when some time later her father came down from his study one day with a volume of *Ivanhoe* in his hand, and said: "I did not intend that my children should ever read novels, but they must read Scott," another door into the realm of fairy was opened to the delighted child.

This power to lift and lose herself in a region of thought so different from her own, became thereafter the peculiar gift by which she was enabled to undertake the work which made her name distinguished.

The library corner, however, did not hold all the good things of life, only part of them. Outside was the happy world of a healthy country child, who grew as joyously as one of her own New England flowers. In the spring there were excursions in the woods and fields after the wild blossoms that once a year turned the country-side into fairy-land; in the summer was the joy of picnics in the old forests, and of fishing

excursions along the banks of the streams; in the autumn came nutting parties, when the children ran races with the squirrels to see who could gather the most nuts; and in the winter, when the snow and ice covered the earth, life went on as gayly as ever, with coasting and snowballing, and the many ways in which the child's heart tunes itself to the spirit of nature.

By the time she was five years old Harriet was a regular pupil at a small school near by, whither she also conducted, day after day, her younger brother, Henry Ward Beecher, afterward the celebrated preacher. She was a very conscientious little pupil, and besides her school lessons, was commended for having learned twenty-seven hymns and two long chapters in the Bible during one summer. School-life henceforth was the serious business of existence, and in her twelfth year she appears as one of the honor pupils at the yearly school exhibition, and was gratified by having her composition read in the presence of the distinguished visitors, her father, the minister, being among the number. The subject of the composition was the immortality of

the soul, and into it Harriet had woven, as only a clever child could, all the serious thoughts that she had gleaned from theological volumes in the library, or sermons that her father preached, or from the grave conversations that were common among the elders of the family. It was listened to with great approval by the visitors, who saw nothing absurd in the idea of a child of twelve discoursing upon such a subject, and it was especially pleasing to Harriet's father, which so delighted the affectionate heart of the little writer that she felt no higher reward could be hers.

Harriet's first flight from the home nest came in her thirteenth year, when she left Litchfield to attend her sister Catherine's school in Hartford. As her father's salary did not permit any extra expense, Harriet went to live in the family of a friend, who in turn sent his daughter to the parsonage at Litchfield that she might attend the seminary there. This exchange of daughters was a very happy arrangement as far as Harriet was concerned, as she enjoyed the responsibility of being so much her own guardian, and took care

of herself and her little room with what she herself calls "awful satisfaction."

Here she began the study of Latin, which fascinated her, the Latin poetry making such an impression on her mind that it became her dream to be a poet. Pages and pages of manuscript were now written in the preparation of a great drama called "Cleon," the scene of which was laid in the time of the Emperor Nero. Every moment that could be spared from actual duties was given to this play, which might have grown to volumes had not the young author been suddenly brought up sharply by her sister, who advised her to stop writing poetry and discipline her mind. Whereupon Harriet plunged into a course of Butler's *Analogy* and other heavy reading, forgot all about the drama, and was so wrought upon by Baxter's *Saint's Rest* that she longed for nothing but to die and be in heaven.

The next years of Harriet's life were spent almost entirely at the Hartford school, where she was successively pupil and teacher until her father removed to Cincinnati, whither she accompanied him with the intention of helping

her sister to found a college for women. And, although all undreamed of, it was in this place that she was first to feel the inspiration of the work that made her famous. During a short visit across the Ohio River into Kentucky, she saw for the first time a large plantation and something of the life of the negro slaves. Though apparently noticing little of what was before her eyes, she was really absorbing everything with all the keenness of a first impression. The mansion of the planter and the humble cot of the negro, the funny pranks and songs of the slaves, and the pathos that touched their lives, all appealed to her so strongly that, years afterward, she was able to reproduce with utmost faithfulness each picturesque detail of plantation life.

In her twenty-fifth year Harriet was married to Professor Stowe, of Lane Seminary. She had for some time been a contributor to various periodicals, and continued her literary work after her marriage, producing only short sketches for various papers, an elementary geography, and a collection of sketches in book form under the

title, *The Mayflower*. These efforts had been well received by publishers, and friends prophesied a satisfactory career, but it was many years afterward before the author gave herself to the literary life with the earnestness and devotion which so characterized her nature.

Some of her experiences in this Western home, where living was so primitive, were very funny, and some were very trying; but through them all Mrs. Stowe kept a clear head and brave heart. Sometimes she would be left without warning with the entire care of her house and children; often her literary work was done at the sick-bed of a child; and more than once a promised story was written in the intervals of baking, cooking, and the superintendence of other household matters; one of her stories at this time was finished at the kitchen table, while every other sentence was addressed to the ignorant maid, who stood stupidly awaiting instructions about the making of brown bread.

After seventeen years' experience in the Western colleges, Professor Stowe accepted a professorship at Bowdoin, and the family removed to

Brunswick, Me. Here her stories and sketches, some humorous, some pathetic, still continued to add to the household's income, and many a comfort that would have been otherwise unknown was purchased with the money thus obtained.

Mrs. Stowe's first important book took the form of an appeal for the freedom of the slaves of the South. One day, while attending communion service in the college chapel, she saw, as in a mental picture, the death-scene of Uncle Tom, afterward described in her celebrated book. Returning home, she wrote out the first draft of that immortal chapter, and calling her children around her read it to them. The two eldest wept at the sad story, which from this beginning grew into the book which made its author famous over the civilized world. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* it was Mrs. Stowe's aim to present the every-day life of the Southern plantation. She chose for her hero one of those typical negro characters whose faithfulness and loyalty would so well illustrate the fidelity of his race, while his sad story would make an appeal for the freedom of his people.

Into this story she wove descriptions of Southern life, delineations of negro character, and so many incidents, pathetic and humorous, that it seemed to present when finished a life-like picture of plantation life. The pathetic figure of Uncle Tom, the sweet grace of Eva, the delightful Topsy, and the grim Yankee spinster show alike the sympathetic heart and mind of the author, who linked them so closely together in the invisible bonds of love. The beautiful tribute that St. Clair pays to his mother's influence in one of the striking passages of the book, was but a memory of Mrs. Stowe's own mother, who died when her daughter was four years old. No one could read this pathetic tale without being touched by the sorrows beneath which the negro race had bowed for generations, and through which he still kept a loyal love for his white master, a pride in the family of which he counted himself a member, and that pathetic patience which had been the birthright of his people.

The book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or *Life Among the Lowly*, ran first as a serial, and came out in book form in 1852. Into it the author had thrown

all the seriousness of her nature, and it met with overwhelming success. It was translated into twenty different languages, and Uncle Tom and Eva passed, like the shadow and sunlight of their native land, hand in hand into the homes, great and humble, of widely scattered nations.

Another plea for the negro called *Dred, a Tale of the Dismal Swamp*, followed *Uncle Tom's Cabin* within a few years, after which Mrs. Stowe turned her attention to the material that lay closer at hand, and began the publication of a series of New England life. Into these she put such a wealth of sympathetic reminiscences, with such a fund of keen observation, that they stand easily as types of the home-life of her native hills. The first of this series was *The Minister's Wooing*, a story of a New England minister's love. It is full of the sights and scenes familiar to the author from childhood, and is a faithful picture of Puritan village life, wherein are introduced many characters as yet new in fiction. Unlike Hawthorne, who sought inspiration in the spiritual questions which so largely made up the life of the Puritans, Mrs. Stowe found her

delight in giving the home-life, the household ambitions, the village interests, a place in literature, thus preserving a phase of society which has passed away even in her own lifetime.

The Minister's Wooing appeared simultaneously with *The Pearl of Orr's Island*, a tale of the Maine coast, in which are introduced an aged fisherman and his old brown sea-chest, and other characters and accessories all imbued with the true sea flavor and forming a story which Whittier pronounced the most charming New England idyll ever written.

In *Old Town Folks*, the most delightful perhaps of her New England stories, Mrs. Stowe has drawn the character of Harry from the memory of her husband's childhood. Professor Stowe had been one of those imaginative children, who, when alone, conjure up visions of fairies and genii to people empty space. He spent many an hour in following the pranks of these unreal people. He imagined that these creatures of his brain could pass through the floor and ceiling, float in the air and flit through meadow or wood, sometimes even rising to the

stars. Sometimes they took the form of friendly brownies who would thresh straw and beans. Two resembled an old Indian man and woman who fought for the possession of a base viol. Another group was of all colors and had no shape at all; while the favorite was in human form and came and answered to the name of Harry.

Besides her New England tales, Mrs. Stowe wrote a charming novel, *Agnes of Sorrento*, the scene of which is laid in Italy.

Little Foxes, *Queer Little People*, and *Little Pussy Willow* are three books for children, written in the intervals of more serious work which included several other novels and some volumes of sketches.

In all her work appears a warm love of humanity, which she studied under many conditions.

Soon after the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Mrs. Stowe accepted an invitation from the Anti-Slavery Society of Glasgow to visit Scotland; her reception was in reality an ovation from the nation. At every railroad station she had to make her way through the crowds that

had gathered to welcome her. Every city she visited honored her with a public greeting, and even her sight-seeing excursions to cathedrals and places of interest were made the occasions of demonstrations of joy from the crowds which quickly gathered. From the nobility to the peasants, who stood at their doors to see her pass by, she was everywhere received as one who had done noble work for the cause of freedom. In England she met with the same enthusiasm, and, both from England and Scotland she received large sums of money to be used for the advancement of the anti-slavery cause in America. Mrs. Stowe has left a sketch of this pleasant episode in her life in a little work called *Sunny Memories.*

Some years later she purchased a winter home in Florida, and here she erected a building to be used as church and school-house by the poorer inhabitants. In this she conducted Sunday-school, singing and sewing classes. Her pleasant experiences in her Southern home are embodied in a series of sketches called *Palmetto Leaves.*

On the seventieth anniversary of her birthday her publishers arranged a garden party in her

honor, to which were invited all the literary celebrities of America. It calls up a pleasant picture to think of her thus surrounded by the distinguished men and women who had gathered to do honor not only to her work for literature, but to that nobility of soul that had made her long life a service for others.

Whittier, Holmes, and many others contributed poems on this occasion.

In American literature Mrs. Stowe stands as its chief woman representative before the Civil War, taking high place by right among the novelists whose sphere is the presentation of national life.

CHAPTER XV

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

1819–1892

James Russell Lowell was born on the 22d of February, 1819, at Cambridge, Mass. Fate had willed that he, beyond all other writers, was to preserve a certain phase of Yankee life and make it the treasure of futurity, and the Cambridge of his early boyhood was the best training he could have received for such a mission.

The then unpretentious village, with its quiet streets shaded with elms, lindens, and horse-chestnuts, was revered throughout New England as the home of Harvard College, but it was much more than that. It was a little world in which still lingered all the quaintness and simplicity of early New England life, and Lowell, imbibing these influences unconsciously in childhood, was able afterward to reproduce their flavor in his

literary work and thus preserve them from oblivion. The birthplace of Lowell was Elmwood, a charming country-seat formerly occupied by a Tory tax-collector, who had emigrated on the outbreak of the Revolution. It had a large, comfortable house shaded by some of the Cambridge elms, which Lowell characteristically remarks were unable fortunately to emigrate with the tax-collector, and the grounds were beautified by the trees and flowers which were the delight of Dr. Lowell, the poet's father.

In Cambridge streets were to be seen many of the sights characteristic of New England village life, suggesting still the village life of England when Shakespeare was a boy. The coach rumbled on its way to Boston, then a little journey away, and old women gathered around the town spring for their weekly washing of clothes. At the inn were discussed all those questions of law, religion, and politics that had not been settled at the town-meeting, and the village barber-shop, with its choice collection of rarities, had the dignity of a museum. So fascinating was this place that the boy who had to have his hair cut was

considered in luck, and was usually accompanied by several of his play-fellows, who took this means of feasting their eyes upon the barber's treasures. Here were tomahawks, Indian bows and arrows, New Zealand paddles and war-clubs, beaks of albatrosses and penguins, and whales' teeth; here were caged canaries and Java sparrows, and one large cockatoo who, the barber asserted, spoke Hottentot. Old Dutch prints covered the walls, and the boys were barbered under the pictured eyes of Frederick the Great and Bonaparte. Perhaps the choicest treasure was the glass model of a ship which the young patrons valued at from one hundred to a thousand dollars, the barber always acquiescing in these generous valuations.

Once a year Cambridge celebrated a curious festival called the Cornwallis, in which, in masquerade, the town's people and country people marched in grotesque processions in honor of the surrender of Cornwallis. There was also the annual muster, when the militia were drilled under the eyes of their admiring wives, mothers, and daughters. But the great event of the year

at Cambridge was Commencement Day. The entire community was aroused to do its best in the celebration of this festival, the fame of which had spread to every corner of New England. The village was turned into a great fair, where came every kind of vender and showman to take the places assigned them by the town constable; the gayly decorated booths extended in an orderly row along the streets, and the entire population gaped unrestrained at the giants, fat women, flying horses, dwarfs, and mermaids, only taking their eyes away long enough to regale themselves with the ginger-beer and egg-pop, sold on the stands or wheeled through the streets in hand-carts by the enterprising venders. The college exercises were dignified and grave, as suited the traditions of its classic halls, but to the boys who, like Lowell, had but this one opportunity in the year, the marvels of the booths and peep-shows made Commencement a red-letter day.

Another charm of old Cambridge was found in the river, which to the boyish imagination led to fairy realms beyond. Once a year the sloop

Harvard, owned by the college, voyaged to the Maine coast to carry back the winter supply of wood. Her going and coming was an event in the life of the Cambridge schoolboy, who watched the departure with wistful eyes, filled the time of absence with romantic imaginings of adventure in the perilous seas, and welcomed her return with eager thirst for the news she might bring. This humble little craft held no secondary place in the interests of Lowell and his mates. The heroic adventures of her crew inspired the boys to bold ventures on the duck pond, the admiral of the home-made fleet being the young Dana, who delighted an after-generation of boys by the story of his actual adventures at sea in the fascinating book, *Two Years Before the Mast.*

Lowell's first school was not far from Elmwood, and although he did not distinguish himself for scholarship, he went willingly every day, returning rather more willingly, perhaps, and sending always his boyish salutation of a cheery whistle to his mother as he approached the house. But in the daily life of the old village, and in the

rambles through wood and by stream, he learned lessons more valuable than those he found in books. Nature, who appealed so strongly to his heart, had made him a poet, and she took her own way of teaching him the mysteries of his art.

Lowell enjoyed his singularly fortunate and happy boyhood as only one gifted with a poetic mind could. To him New England village life revealed a charm that enabled him in after-days to paint a picture of it as lovingly faithful as one of Shakespeare's scenes. In his charming reminiscence, *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago*, he has preserved one of the dearest memories of his boyhood. *Beaver Brook* and *Indian Summer Reveries* are also transcriptions of those idyllic days of his youth.

Lowell entered Harvard in his sixteenth year and was graduated in his twentieth, during which time he says he read everything except the books in the college course. It was during these years, however, that he studied the great poets of the world, while romances, travels, voyages, and history were added as a flavor to his self-chosen course of study.

Perhaps he showed the true bent of his mind in his boyhood poem, addressed to the old horse-chestnuts, whose arms twined themselves around his study-room at home. He was class poet for his year, but was not allowed to read his poem, as he was at the time temporarily suspended from the college. In this poem Lowell made good-natured fun of Carlyle, Emerson, and other philosophers, whose thought was just beginning to influence their generation, thus hinting the power which made him later the most successful humorist of America.

After leaving college Lowell studied law and was admitted to the bar, a profession which he almost immediately saw would make him only miserable, and which he soon left. In his twenty-second year he published his first book of verse under the title *A Year's Life*, a volume which was mainly inspired by his admiration for the woman who afterward became his wife, and which gives indication of the power which was developed later, though in the after-editions of his works the poet discarded most of the productions of that time. A little later Lowell

conceived the idea of starting a magazine, which should rival in value and fame the celebrated Philadelphia magazines, which were believed to stand for the highest literary art in America. The magazine was named *The Pioneer*, and its editorship and ownership were shared with a friend. It appeared in January, 1843, and ran for three months, ending in dismal failure, though the contributors numbered such names as Poe, Elizabeth Barrett, Whittier, and the artist Story. It was not until twelve years later, when his own fame was well established, that Lowell undertook the editorship of another magazine, and put to practical use his reserve talent for adapting and selecting for popular favor the best literary work of the time.

A year after the failure of *The Pioneer*, Lowell published a second volume of poems. In this collection occur the poems *The Legend of Brittany; Prometheus*, a poem founded on the old Greek myth of Prometheus, who incurs the wrath of Jupiter by giving fire to mankind; *The Heritage*, a stirring ballad, and *The Shep-*

herd of King Admetus, embodying the myth of the coming of Apollo to King Admetus and his gift of poesy to the world. The volume heralded the fame that Lowell was afterward to attain as a poet.

In 1846 the Mexican War was the great political question of the day, and the country was divided in opinion as to whether the Government had undertaken the war in a spirit of justice, or merely for the sake of acquiring new territory. The South mainly favored the war, while a portion of the North opposed it on the principle that the new territory would favor the extension of slavery. There was much talk of glory, and the heroes of the day were the generals and soldiers who were winning laurels on the Mexican battle-fields.

Lowell considered the war dishonorable and opposed to the principles of liberty, and he took a firm stand against it. He did this, not, as may be said, in his own way, for the way was new to him, but in a manner that turned the vaunted heroism of the day into ridicule, and appealed to the public conscience by its patriotism and hon-

esty. Keeping his own personality in the background, Lowell sent his wits roving into the world of memory and brought from it a hero who was destined to rival in fame the leader of the Mexican campaigns. This hero possessed the old courage, fire, and enthusiasm which had braved the British in Revolutionary days. His patriotism was a pure flame, his wisdom that of the builders who had founded a commonwealth of civil rights in the midst of the primeval forest; his common-sense would have made him a king in Yankeedom, and his humor was as grim as that of the old Puritans, who believed in fighting the devil with his own weapons. He came on the scene dressed in homespun, and spoke the homely dialect of New England, that singular speech so unlike any other and which seems to have had grafted upon the original English all the eccentricities which made the Puritans a peculiar people.

This singular figure which now attracted public attention was first heard from in the columns of the Boston *Courier*, as the author of a poem on the subject of the raising of volunteers for the

Mexican War. The poem was written in the Yankee dialect and, it was stated, had been sent to the office by the poet's father, Ezekiel Biglow. The verses rang with New England canniness, and the familiar dialect acquired a dignity never before acknowledged. Scholars, statesmen, critics, and the public at large, after a first few puzzling moments grasped the full force of the new crusade, and the standard-bearer and author, Hosea Biglow, became the most talked about man of the time. Previous to this society had laughed at the reformers. Now people laughed with Hosea at the supporters of the war. From this time Hosea Biglow's sayings and doings were the most popular comment on the political situation. Whatever happened was made the subject of a poem by Hosea, expressing sometimes his own opinions and sometimes the opinions of Parson Wilbur, John P. Robinson, and other persons introduced into the series. These poems met with tremendous success. Wherever it was possible they were set to music and sung with all the abandon of a popular ballad. There is a story told to the effect that John P. Robin-

son grew so tired of hearing the song in which he is introduced that he fled across the sea in despair. This brought no relief, however, for the street gamins of London and the travelling American and Englishman, wherever he could be found, unconsciously greeted his ears with the rollicking refrain :

"But John P.
Robinson, he
Sez they didn't know everythin'
Down in Judee."

Among the political poems occurs in "The Notices of the Press," which form the introduction, the exquisite love-poem, *The Courtin'*.

In wit, scholarship, and knowledge of human nature, the Biglow papers are acknowledged as a classic, and the future student of American literature will be ever grateful for this preservation of the Yankee dialect by New England's greatest poet.

Lowell's next important contribution to literature was the publication of the poem, *The Vision of Sir Launfal.* This beautiful poem, in which in a vision a young knight arms himself and

starts in search of the Holy Grail, reads like a sacred legend of the Middle Ages. It is full of the pious spirit of the old monks who still believed the story of the existence of the Holy Grail, and the possibility of its recovery by the pure in heart. This story, which has appealed to the art of every age, found in Lowell a poet worthy of its expression, and one who has transcribed the mysticism of the past into the vital charity of the present. Though a dream of the Old World, it is still the New England poet who translates it, as may be seen from the bits of landscape shining through it. Glimpses of the northern winter; of the wind sweeping down from the heights, and of the little brook that

> " Heard it and built a roof
> 'Neath which he could house him winter-proof,"

show the poet in his mood of loving reminiscence.

In his poems *Prometheus*, *The Legend of Brittany*, *Rhœcus*, and the collection known as *Under the Willows*, which includes the *Commemoration Ode*, Lowell shows his highest point as a poet, which is also reached in *The Cathedral.* His

was a large and generous spirit, which found no experience or condition of life trivial. He was in sympathy with nature and with the aims and happiness of humanity. The affectionate side of his nature is shown in many of his poems, one of the most beautiful being that which is expressed in *The First Snowfall*, a tender and sacred memory of one of the poet's children.

The *Commemoration Ode*, written in honor of the Harvard graduates who fell in the War for the Union, was read by Lowell July 21, 1865, at the Commemoration Service held in their memory. No hall could hold the immense audience which assembled to hear their chosen poet voice the grief of the nation over its slain in the noblest poem produced by the war. To those present the scene, which has become historic, was rendered doubly impressive from the fact that Lowell mourned in his verse many of his own kindred.

A Fable for Critics is a satire in verse upon the leading authors of America. The first bit was written and despatched to a friend without any thought of publication. The fable was con-

tinued in the same way until the daily bits were sent to a publisher by the friend, who thought the matter too good for private delectation only. In this production Lowell satirizes all the writers of the day, himself included, with a wit so pungent and so sound a taste that the criticism has appealed to the succeeding generation, which has in nearly every case vindicated the poet's judgment of his contemporaries. The authorship remained for some time unknown, and was only disclosed by Lowell when claimed by others.

Besides his poetry Lowell produced several volumes of charming prose. Among these is *The Fireside Travels*, which contains his description of Cambridge in his boyhood; *Among My Books*, and *My Study Windows*, which contain literary criticism of the choicest sort, the poet easily taking rank as one of the foremost critics of his time. Throughout his prose we find the same feeling for nature and love for humanity that distinguishes his poetry. His whole literary career was but an outgrowth of his own broad, sympathetic, genial nature, interwoven with the acquirements of the scholar.

Lowell was for a large part of his life Professor of Modern Languages and Belles-lettres at Harvard. Soon after its beginning he became editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and he also was for a time one of the editors of the *North American Review*.

Outside of his literary life he was known as a diplomat who served his country with distinction as minister, successively, to Spain and to England. Though finding congenial surroundings in foreign lands, Lowell was always preeminently an American; one who, even in his country's darkest hour, saw promise of her glory, and to whom her fame was ever the dearest sentiment of his heart. Most of his life was spent in his old home at Elmwood, where he died in 1892.

CHAPTER XVI

FRANCIS PARKMAN

1823-1893

At twelve o'clock on a summer night, nearly a half century ago, a young man of twenty-three stood in the shadow of a great Indian camp watching intently the scene before him. On the farther side of the camp a number of Indians were gathered about the fire, which threw into relief their strong, handsome frames, for they were all young and formed, as they stood there, the hope and ambition of their tribe. Suddenly a loud chant broke the silence of the night, and at the same time the young braves began circling around the fire in a grotesque, irregular kind of dance. The chant was now interrupted by bursts of sharp yells, and the motions of the dancers, now leaping, now running, again creeping slyly, suggested the movements of some stealthy ani-

mal; this was, in fact, what was intended, for the young warriors were the "Strong Hearts" of the Dacotahs, an association composed of the bravest youths of the tribe, whose *totem* or tutelary spirit was the fox, in whose honor they were now celebrating one of their dances.

The stranger, who stood looking on at a little distance away, since the superstitions of the tribe would not allow him to approach too near the scene of the solemnities, was Francis Parkman, a Harvard graduate, who had left civilization for the purpose of studying the savage form of Indian life face to face.

Parkman was born in Boston in 1823. He was noted as a child who threw himself body and soul into whatever happened to be the pursuit of the hour, and thus illustrated even in childhood the most striking feature of his character. During a residence in the country from his eighth to his twelfth year he was seized with a passion for natural history, and bent all his energies to collecting eggs, insects, reptiles, and birds, and to trapping squirrels and woodchucks, practising in the meantime shooting in Indian fashion with

bow and arrow. At twelve he forsook natural history and found chemistry the only interest in life. For four years longer he now secluded himself largely from family life and youthful companions, while he experimented in his amateur laboratory. Acids, gases, specific gravity, and chemical equations were the only delight of his life, and he pursued his experiments with all the ardor of the old seekers of the philosopher's stone. But at sixteen the charms of chemistry faded, and he became again a haunter of the woods, but was saved in the end from becoming a naturalist by an equally strong passion for history, a passion so real that at eighteen he had chosen his life-work, that of historian of the French in the New World. With the idea of his work had also come the conception of its magnitude, and he calmly looked forward to twenty years of hard and exacting labor before realizing his hopes. Still, mastered by the spirit of thoroughness, he spent all his vacations in Canada, following in the footsteps of the early French settlers. Here in the forest, he slept on the earth with no covering but a blanket,

exhausted his guides with long marches, and exposed his health by stopping neither for heat nor rain. Fascinated by the visions of forest life and with the pictures which the old stories called up, Parkman entered upon the literary preparation for his work with zeal. Indian history and ethnology were included in his college course, while he spent many hours that should have been devoted to rest in studying the great English masters of style. He was graduated at twenty-one, and after a short trip to Europe started for the Western plains to begin his historical studies from nature.

For months he and a college friend had followed the wanderings of a portion of the Dacotahs in their journey across the Western prairies to the Platte River, where they were to be joined by thousands of others of their tribe, and take part in the extermination of the Snake Indians, their bitter enemies. They had suffered from the heat and the dust of the desert; they had hunted buffalo among the hills and ravines of the Platte border, and had slept night after night in open camps while wolves and panthers crawled dan-

gerously near. To all intents and purposes their life was that of the Indian of the plains, an alien to civilization, a hunter of buffalo, and an enemy to all human beings except those of his own nation.

It was in the year 1846, three years before the discovery of gold in California, and the great West was still a land of forests, and the home of wandering tribes of Indians. From the Mississippi to the Pacific coast the country was entirely unsettled, with the exception of a few military forts and trading-posts. Here the Indian lived as his race had lived from time immemorial. Dressed in his robe of skins, with his gay moccasins on his feet, his dog-skin quiver at his back, and his powerful bow slung across his shoulder, the Dacotah of that day was a good specimen of a race that has almost disappeared. The only two objects in life were war and the hunt, and he was ready at a moment's notice to strike his tent and engage in either.

Six or eight times during the year the Great Spirit was called upon, fasts were made, and war parades celebrated preliminary to attacks upon

other tribes, while during the remainder of the time he hunted the buffalo which supplied him with every necessity of life. The coverings for their tents, their clothing, beds, ropes, coverings for their saddles, canoes, water-jars, food, and fuel, were all obtained from this animal, which also served as a means of trading with the posts. The Indians had obtained rifles from the whites in a few cases, but they still largely used the bow and arrow, with which their predecessors on the plains had hunted the mammoth and mastodon in prehistoric ages. Their arrows were tipped with flint and stone, and their stone hammers were like those used by the savages of the Danube and Rhine when Europe was still uncivilized.

While civilization had laid a chain of cities and towns around the borders of the continent, the American Indian of the interior remained exactly as his forefathers had been. And it was to study this curious specimen of humanity, whose like had faded from almost every other part of the world, that Parkman had come among them. He wished to reveal the In-

dian in his true character, and he thought he could only do this by living the Indian life. And so, for six months, he shared their lodges, their feasts, hunts, and expeditions of war. He became acquainted with their beliefs in the Great Spirit, the father of the universe, and in the lesser spirits which controlled the winds and rain, and which were found inhabiting the bodies of the lower animals. He learned to know the curious character of their "medicine-men" and their witch-doctors, and all their strange superstitions regarding the mysteries of life and death and the origin of man.

Suffering constantly from physical ills, and in danger of death at any moment from the treachery of the red men, Parkman yet was able to maintain his position among them with dignity, and to be acknowledged worthy of their hospitality, and he took advantage of this to make his study of them thorough. The Dacotahs were a branch of the Sioux, one of the fiercest of the tribes of the plains. In his journey with them Parkman traversed the regions of the Platte, which was one of the best known routes to Ore-

gon and California. Frequent parties of emigrants passed them on their way to new homes, and those, with the traders' posts and occasional bands of hunters, gave them their only glimpses of white faces. Reaching the upper waters of the Platte, they branched off for a hunting trip to the Black Hills, and then returning, made the passage of the Rocky Mountains, gained the head-waters of the Arkansas, and so returned to the settlements.

It was a trip full of danger and adventure, but Parkman had gained what he wanted—a picture of Indian life still preserved in the solitudes of the plains and mountains as inviolate as the rivers and rocks themselves. A few years later the discovery of gold in California changed this condition almost as if by magic. The plains and mountains became alive with unnumbered hosts of emigrants on their way to the gold fields. Cities and towns sprung up where before Indian lodges and buffalo herds had held sway. Year by year the Indians changed in character and habits, adopting in some measure the dress of the whites and their manner of liv-

ing. The true Indian of the plains passed out of history, and but for Parkman's visit, even the memory of him as an example of the picturesque freedom of savage life, might have been lost.

A year after his return to the east Parkman published an account of his adventures in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, under the title *The Oregon Trail*, the name by which the old route was generally known. Later on these sketches appeared in book form. They formed Parkman's first book and indicated the scheme of his life-work.

Parkman had elaborated his first idea, and now intended writing an account of the history of the French influence in America from the earliest visits of Verazzani and Jacques Cartier, down to the time when the English drove out the French from Canada and the Mississippi Valley, and laid the foundations of what was destined to be the American Republic.

His second book, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, published five years after his adventures among the Sioux, deals with the last act of the struggle

between France and England. This book appeared thus early in the series because at that time, on account of ill-health, Parkman could not begin any work of vast magnitude such as would require exhaustive research.

The conspiracy of Pontiac, a chief of the Ottawas, who formed a confederation of the tribes to drive the English from the forts near the Great Lakes, was a theme complete in itself, and yet one that could easily supplement any series dealing with similar subjects. Parkman visited the scene of Pontiac's exploits, talked with the descendants of the tribes which still lingered around the Great Lakes, which then formed the outposts of the English, and stored his mind with such local traditions and color as would give character to the narrative. The book was written through the aid of readers and an amanuensis, whose task it was to gather the notes, which Parkman sifted until ready for dictation. It dealt with one of the most picturesque episodes of the French and Indian War, and the character of Pontiac—brave, patriotic, and ready for any fate—was drawn with a master-touch.

Fourteen years passed by before Parkman presented another volume of the series which he intended should illustrate the complete history of the French in America. This volume was called the *Pioneers of France in the New World*, and opens the theme with a description of the early voyagers, thus making it in point of place the first book of the series.

His books, which appeared at different times after the *Pioneers of France*, under the titles *The Jesuits of North America; The Discovery of the Great West; The Old Regime in Canada; A Half Century of Conflict;* and *Montcalm and Wolfe*, indicate each in turn the character of its scope.

They tell the history of the French race in America for over two hundred years, beginning with the old voyagers who sought in America a region of romance and mystery which should rival the fairy realms of the poets of the Middle Ages, and ending with the last efforts of the Indians to recover their land from the grasp of the hated English.

Through all this period the Indians had re-

garded the French as friends. Jesuit missionaries had penetrated the wilds of the Mississippi, and had brought to the tribes on its banks the message of peace and brotherly love. They spread the story of Christ from Carolina to the St. Lawrence, and from the Mississippi to the Atlantic. They lived the Indian life, dwelling in lodges, eating the Indian food, conforming as much as possible to the Indian habits, and retaining, in their geographical descriptions, the Indian names of the lakes and rivers, so dear to the savage heart.

They made, in the main, a peaceful conquest of the country, and they won the natives to such a degree that in the contest with the English which ensued the Indian remained throughout the firm friend and ally of the French. The English had thus two enemies to deal with instead of one, the military knowledge of the French being in every case strengthened by the subtle and savage modes of Indian warfare. This state of things kept the final issue doubtful, even though the English won victory after victory, for the taking of a fort and the slaughter

or capture of the garrison might be followed at any time by a murderous night attack from the savage allies, who ignored the civilized methods of war and would never acknowledge defeat.

In this work Parkman not only aimed at the history of the actual struggle between France and England for the possession of North America, but he also wished to present clearly the story of the French alone, as they appeared in their character of settlers and conquerors of uncivilized lands.

In the vivid pictures with which Parkman tells this story of their life in the New World, we see a strong contrast to the Spanish power in South America, as illustrated in the pages of history. The Spaniards conquered a race already far advanced in civilization, reduced it to slavery, destroyed its race characteristics, and made everything else bend to their insatiate love of gold.

Very different was the conduct of the French in their treatment of the savage tribes that they found inhabiting the primeval forests of North America. The Jesuit missionaries and the persecuted Huguenots alike approached the Indian

with one message, that of Christian love and faith in the brotherhood of man. To them the dark child of the forests, savage in nature, untamed in habit, was still a brother who must be lifted to a higher life. And to do this they lived among them as teachers and advisers rather than as conquerors.

In these pages all the heroes of the French occupation appear before us as in their daily life with the Indians: Marquette, La Salle, Tonti, Fronténac, Du Gorgues—whose visit of vengeance is so well described that he is forever remembered by the Indians as an avenger of their race—and the men of lesser note. We have also a picture of the Hurons, the Iroquois, and other tribes as they appeared to the early French settlers; and in fact Parkman has left no phase or detail of the movement untouched. It was a vast undertaking, and carried out in the midst of many difficulties, and its completion placed Parkman's name among the greatest historians of all time.

Parkman suffered from ill-health from his earliest years throughout his life, and to this

was added partial blindness, which made his literary work as great a task as that of Prescott. Very often he was interrupted for months and years by illness, and in the main he had to depend upon the help of others in collecting his material; but his purpose never faltered, and the end was brilliant with success.

CHAPTER XVII

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

1809–1894

Among the boys most familiar with the scenes described in Lowell's recollections of his youth was Oliver Wendell Holmes, the son of the pastor of the First Congregational Church at Cambridge. Holmes was ten years older than Lowell, but Cambridge altered little between the birthtimes of the two poets, and in the writings of both are embalmed many loving memories of the old village.

In his reminiscence of the famous Commencement Week, so faithfully described by Lowell, Holmes says, "I remember that week well, for something happened to me once at that time, namely, I was born." Many after-touches show us how the great week possessed for Holmes the same magic charm it held for Lowell. The

wonders of the menagerie where he beheld for the first time a live tiger, the side-show where he enjoyed the delights of Punch and Judy, and gazed with awe at the biggest live fat boy known to showmen, and the marvels of the toy-counter, over which hung the inscription,

"Look, but handle not,"

shared honors with the Governor's parade, and Commencement exercises, and in fact far outranked them with Holmes, who confessed that he would willingly have stayed from morning till night viewing their delights, and declared that the sound of the tent-raising on the Common the night before the show began could be compared to nothing but the evening before Agincourt!

Holmes was born in August, when, he tells us in one of his charming essays, the meadows around Cambridge were brilliant with the cardinal flower, and blossoming buckwheat covered the fields, while the bayberry, barberry, sweet-fern, and huckleberry made delightful retreats for the small boy of the neighborhood. In the

same essay he describes the old garden of the parsonage, with its lilac-bushes, hyacinths, tulips, peonies, and hollyhocks, its peaches, nectarines, and white grapes, growing in friendly companionship with the beets, carrots, onions, and squashes, while the old pear-tree in the corner, called by Holmes "the moral pear-tree," because its fruit never ripened, taught him one of his earliest lessons. Bits of reminiscence like this scattered throughout the pages of Holmes enable us to reconstruct the scenes of his youth and to follow him from the time he was afraid of the masts of the sloops down by the bridge, "being a very young child," through all the years of his boyhood. The parsonage was an old-fashioned gambrel-roofed house, which Holmes recurs to again and again with loving remembrance. The rooms were large and light and had been the scenes of stirring events in other days.

On the study floor could still be seen the dents of the muskets stacked there in Revolutionary times, and an old family portrait in one of the upper rooms still bore the sword-thrusts

of the British soldiers. A certain dark store-room contained a pile of tables and chairs, which to the child's fancy seemed to have rushed in there to hide, and tumbled against one another as people do when frightened. Another store-room held an array of preserve-jars containing delicious sweets; before the door of this room he would stand with one eye glued to the keyhole while his childish imagination revelled in the forbidden luxuries.

The house had also a ghostly garret about which clustered many legends, and these in connection with certain patches of sand bare of grass and vine and called the Devil's Footsteps, which might have been seen around the neighborhood, tended to make the bedtime hour a season of dread to the imaginative boy, who saw shadowy red-coats in every dark corner, and with every unfamiliar noise expected even more uncanny visitors.

Outside was the old garden, sweet and sunny, and close to it the friendly wall of a neighbor's house, up which climbed a honeysuckle which stretched so far back into memory that the child thought it had been there always, "like the sky

and stars," and on the whole the atmosphere of the old home was most wholesome.

When Holmes was but a little child he was sent to Dame Prentice's school, where he studied the primer and spent his leisure moments in falling in love with his pretty girl schoolmates or playing with certain boyish toys which were always confiscated sooner or later by the schoolmistress, and went to help fill a large basket which stood ready to receive such treasures. At ten years of age he began attendance at the Cambridgeport school, where he had for schoolmates Margaret Fuller and Richard Henry Dana, and where he remained for some years.

Holmes says that in these years of his childhood every possible occasion for getting a crowd together was made the most of—school anniversaries and town centennials; Election Day, which came in May, when everyone carried a bunch of lilacs and the small boys ate "election buns" of such size that the three regular meals had to be omitted; Fourth of July, a very grand holiday indeed, when the festivities were opened by the Governor; Commencement Week, with

its glories of shows and dancing on the Common, were each in turn made seasons of joy for the youthful denizens of Cambridge and Boston. Perhaps the most gratifying of all the holidays was the old-fashioned Thanksgiving, when even the sermon, though of greater length than usual, "had a subdued cheerfulness running through it," which kept reminding the children of the turkey and oyster-sauce, the plum-pudding, pumpkin-pie, oranges, almonds, and shagbarks awaiting them at home, and the chink of the coin in the contribution-boxes was but a joyous prelude to the music of roasting apples and nuts.

Holmes left the Cambridgeport school to enter Phillips Academy, and has left us a charming account of this first visit to Andover, whither he went in a carriage with his parents, becoming more and more homesick as the time came for parting, until finally he quite broke down and for a few days was utterly miserable. But he had happy days at Andover, and revisiting the place in after years he describes himself as followed by the little ghost of himself, who went with him to the banks of the Showshine and Merri-

mac ; to the old meeting-house, the door of which was bullet-riddled by the Indians ; to the school-rooms where he had recited Euclid and Virgil ; to the base-ball field, and to the great bowlder upon which the boys cracked nuts, proving such a faithful guide that when the day was over Holmes almost committed the folly of asking at the railroad office for two tickets back to Boston. Perhaps of all the celebrated men who have been pupils at the famous school no one held it more lovingly in his heart than he who turned back after so many years of success to pay this loving tribute to its memory.

The stay at Andover lasted but a year, during which time Holmes discovered that he could write verse, and gained a little reputation thereby, which led to his being made class-poet when he left school to enter Harvard, in his sixteenth year. Throughout his college life he kept his reputation as a maker of humorous verse, and was perhaps the most popular member of the various societies and clubs for which Harvard was noted. He was graduated in his twentieth year, and within a year of this time had decided to study medicine,

and after a two years' course in Boston went abroad to attend lectures in Paris and Edinburgh.

But the practice of medicine included but a few years of Holmes's life, as in 1847 he accepted the chair of anatomy and physiology at Harvard, holding the position for thirty-five years.

During his years of study and practice, Holmes had gained gradually the reputation of a clever literary man whose name was familiar to the readers of the best periodicals of the day. This reputation began with the publication of a poem, *Old Ironsides*, which was inspired by the proposition to destroy, as of no further use, the old frigate Constitution, which had done such glorious service during the War of 1812. These verses, which begin the literary life of Holmes, ring with a noble patriotism which flashed its fire into the hearts of thousands of his countrymen and made the author's name almost a household word. They were published originally in the Boston *Advertiser*, but so furious was the storm aroused that within a short time they had been copied in newspapers all over the land,

printed on handbills that placarded the walls, and circulated in the streets from hand to hand. It was a satisfaction to the young patriot to know that his appeal had not been made in vain, and that the old ship was allowed to rest secure in the keeping of a grateful nation. A few years later Holmes published his first volume of poems, collected from various periodicals, and gained medals for some essays on medical subjects. For many years after this his literary work consisted chiefly of fugitive poems, written very often for special occasions, such as class anniversaries and dinners.

It was, however, by the publication of a series of essays in the *Atlantic Monthly*, which was started in 1857, with James Russell Lowell as editor, that Holmes began his career as the household intimate of every lover of reading in America. These essays, which are now collected in four volumes, appeared in the *Atlantic*, at intervals between the series, between 1857 and 1859, and thus cover almost the entire period of the author's life as a man of letters.

The first series—*The Autocrat at the Break-*

fast-Table—struck the key-note for the rest, a note which showed the author's heart attuned in its broad yet subtle sympathy to the heart of his race, and created such a friendship as rarely exists between author and reader. In the Autocrat Holmes introduces a variety of characters which at intervals flit throughout the rest of the series.

The papers are thrown into the form of talks at the breakfast-table between the author and his fellow-boarders, and so strong is the personal flavor that they seem to the reader like the home-letters of an absent member of the family. The landlady and her son, Benjamin Franklin, the sharp-eyed spinster in black, the young fellow "whose name seems to be John and nothing else," and the school-teacher, appear and disappear side by side with Little Boston, Iris, and the characters of the other series, and emphasize the life-likeness of the whole. It never seems in reading these papers that the *dramatis personæ* are anything else than living human beings, with whom Holmes actually converses around the boarding-house table or at his own fireside. The series, besides *The Autocrat at the Breakfast-*

Table, includes *The Professor at the Breakfast-Table*, *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table*, and *Over the Teacups*, the last being separated from the others by an interval of thirty years.

One of the chief charms of these essays is found in the bits of biography which stamp them in so many cases as personal history. One may read here the nature of the man who could thus step back into the realm of childhood, appreciate the delicate grace of girlhood, enjoy the robust enthusiasm of young manhood, and pause with reverent sympathy before the afflicted. Behind each character portrayed one feels the healthful, generous throb of a humanity to which no ambition of soul could seem foreign or no defect appeal in vain. Scattered throughout the volumes are many charming verses, to some of which Holmes owes his fame as a poet. In *The Autocrat at the Breakfast-Table* occurs, among others, the celebrated poem, *The Chambered Nautilus*, which shows perhaps the highest point to which Holmes's art as a poet has reached. This poem, founded upon the many-chambered shell of the pearly nautilus, is made by the poet to

illustrate the progress of the soul in its journey through life; the spiritual beauty of the verse shows it a genuine reflection of that soul illumination which made of the poet's Puritan ancestors a peculiar people. Many other poems bear the mark of this spiritual insight, and stamp the author as possessing the highest poetic sense. But it is perhaps in his humorous poems that Holmes has appealed to the greatest number of readers. Throughout the verse of this class runs the genuine Yankee humor, allied to high scholarship and the finest literary art.

Many of the verses seem but an echo in rhyme of the half-serious, half-whimsical utterances of the Breakfast-Table Series. Who but the Autocrat himself could have given literary form to the exquisite pathos of *The Last Leaf*, the delicious quaintness of *Dorothy Q*, or the solemn drollery of *The Katy Did?*

Many of the more popular poems are simply *vers d'occasion*, written for some class reunion, college anniversary, or state dinner. These poems, collected under the title *Poems of the Class of '29*, show Holmes in his most charming

mood of reminiscence. Through all his poetry shines here and there an intense sympathy with nature, for running side by side with his appreciation of human interests we see ever that deep love of nature which is the mark of the true poet. Trees and flowers, the seasons, the meadows, rivers, clouds, and the enchanting mysteries of twilight touch his heart to sympathetic vibrations, and their beauty enters into and becomes a part of himself. In this sense some of his most charming recollections cease to be merely remembrance; they are the very air and sunlight which he breathed and which became incorporated into his being. Thus the old garden whose fragrance lingers so loving in his memory and is enshrined with such tender grace in his pages is not a description, but a breath of that far-away childhood which still shines for him immortally beautiful; and the fire-flies flitting across the darkened meadows bring once again to his mind the first flash of insight into the wonder and meaning of the night.

In some charming pages he has told us of his love for trees, particularly of the old elms which

are the pride of the New England villages, and in equally poetic vein he has emphasized the beauty of the pond-lily, the cardinal flower, the huckleberry pasture, and the fields of Indian corn.

Dr. Holmes is also known as a novelist as well as essayist and poet. His three novels, *Elsie Venner*, *The Guardian Angel*, and *A Mortal Antipathy*, are undoubtedly the results of his experience as a physician, for each in turn is founded upon some mental trait which sets the hero or heroine apart from the rest of mankind. In the treatment of these characteristics Holmes has made apparent the powerful effect of heredity upon the life of the human being. These novels are chiefly valuable as character-studies by an earnest student of moral science whose literary bias tempted him to throw them into the form of fiction. While touched with the true Holmes flavor, they cannot be called fiction of the highest order nor do they emphasize Holmes's place in literature. They seem rather to show his versatility as a writer and to illustrate his familiarity with those subtle prob-

lems of character that have always puzzled mankind.

Holmes's medical and literary essays, poems, novels, and other miscellany have been collected in thirteen volumes, the last of which, *Over the Teacups*, appeared but a short time before his death.

He spent most of his life in Boston, his home there being the favorite meeting-place for the most distinguished of his countrymen and a recognized rallying-point for foreign guests. He was the last of that brilliant circle which made New England famous as the literary centre of America; in many senses he combined the excellences which have given American letters their place in the literature of the world.

Beside the writers who founded American literature must be placed many others whose work belongs to the same period. In history and biography, besides the work of the great historians, we have Hildreth's *History of the United States*, Lossing's *Field Book of the Revolution*, Schoolcraft's studies and researches

among the Indian tribes, the carefully written biographies of Sparks, the Peter Parley and Abbott stories for the young, and numerous other contributions which throw valuable light upon the early history of the United States.

In fiction the pictures of Southern life by Sims, and the romances of Dutch life in New York by Hoffman, preserve the colonial traditions, and with many other writers of lesser note supplement the work of the great novelists.

The philosophy of Emerson has found expression in the writings of Bronson Alcott, Theodore Parker, and Margaret Fuller. In poetry, the still honored names of Fitz-Greene Halleck, Joseph Rodman Drake, Elizabeth Kinney, Alice and Phœbe Cary illustrate the place that they held in the popular heart. Chief among these minor singers stands John Howard Payne, whose immortal song has found a home in nearly every land.